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platyrrhine; a Dravidian element, which some would prefer to call Mediterranean—dolichocephalic leptorrhine; and a slight brachycephalic element, which Mr. Roy is clearly inclined to ascribe to an alpine or palaeo-alpine source rather than a mongoloid one. He states that, although he found instances of oblique eyes, he never found a case of the epicanthic fold in Bastar. Personally, I am still unconvinced. My own impression of the Marias is that there is a slight but definite mongoloid element. Of course, these impressions are merely the result of optical observation, and unsupported by any sort of scientific measurement, and it is possible that I have been prejudiced by a certain psychological resemblance between the Marias and their neighbours and the submongoloid hillmen of Assam.

Culturally, the parallels afforded by the Maria Gonds are often interesting and suggestive, though it is possible here to mention only a few. Some of them are definitely reminiscent of tribes farther south in the peninsula. Thus the use of separate huts or shelters for the segregation of menstruating women is a custom shared with several of the Travancore hill tribes, while the objection to performing the sexual act inside a dwelling is shared with the Kadar of Cochin State, and probably with other tribes. It may perhaps be referred to a period when, as with the Andamanese to-day, the only permanent dwelling-house was an unpartitioned communal hut.

Other traits there are which recall tribes of Munda affinities. The association of peacocks with the dead and the use of kettle-drums and dish-shaped gongs are shared with the Munda-speaking Sawara of the Madras Agency Tracts, and the use of the multiple cord belts for women with the Bondo Parja of the same area and with the Chagyik Konyak of the Naga hills in Assam, items of culture, of course, which may just as well have passed from west to east as vice versa, or which may merely have been drawn by various tribes from a common source. The practices of erecting a dolmen as a seat for a village elder, for the 'Village Mother' or for the ghost of a dead person to sit on, a circle of stones for the village *panchayat* and a memorial menhir in the village of ancestral origin, together with a belief in a collective clan soul and what amounts to a form of ancestor-worship recall very strongly the Sawara, Munda and Khasi cultures, while they link up with other similar practices of the megalithic cultures farther east, e.g. in the Naga hills, Mentawi, Farther Asia generally and even the Pacific. The same group of cultures is again suggested by the use of a communal bachelors' hall, of the sago palm and of grass rain-coats, by stilt-walking and by the making of fire by means of a fire-saw instead of a drill. This

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particular fire-saw used by Mr. Grigson's Marias would seem to be much nearer the original implement than the saw-thong form used in Assam or (e.g.) Borneo, for the Maria fire-saw needs three men to manipulate it, while one Naga or Kayan can make fire with a thong worked by his two hands under a hearth held in place by one foot; the Mikir and Nicobarese types, usually worked by two men, forming links between the Maria and the Naga types. On the other hand, Maria ceremonial fire *must* apparently be obtained from an existing household fire; the Naga tribes, on the contrary, must employ thong-ignited need-fire, while their neighbours the Kuki tribes, who seldom use such an apparatus, may obtain it from flint and steel, but not from matches. One is tempted to infer a reminiscence of a time when the making of fire was unknown in the Abujhmar hills, as in the Andaman islands, and the importation of a primitive form of the fire-saw which has developed elsewhere into a simpler and more useful apparatus. In contrast to the fire-saw the Maria blacksmith's bellows have South Indian and African rather than Indonesian affinities, while the bamboo ideochord is not played by the Maria, as by the Thado or the Kayan, by plucking the raised bark 'strings' but by tapping them, making the instrument in their hands rather a xylophone than a guitar.

Reference has already been made to the megalithic culture of the Maria, now apparently rapidly decaying. Here again, much is suggestive of various Assam and Indonesian cultures. Menhirs are transported as by Lhota Nagas and erected as by the Angami, while stone cists are put up by the village path. Seed is fertilised with blood, suggesting not only the Khond *meriah* sacrifice, but also the general theory underlying the head-hunting practices of Naga, Wa, Kayan, Igorot or Taigal from Assam to Formosa. A water-dwelling snake-demon like that of the Maria pervades Thado superstition; shooting stars are 'star dung' alike to the Sema Naga and the Maria; like the Maria, the Ao Naga dances with bells on his buttocks. That incest and other breaches of taboo are visited on the offenders or their kin by man-eating tigers is a typical Naga belief, and the inheritance of his father's house by the youngest son a common Naga practice, though Mr. Grigson's account of it among his Gonds suggests that the reason is to be found in the small value of the building and site, which would certainly not hold good for the Angami. The capture of fish by beating noxious or intoxicating plant juices into the river, like the use of beetle grubs for food, is a very widespread practice indeed, but there is something particularly suggestive of Tibeto-Burmese affinities in the termination of so many Maria clan names in *-mi*, which in Naga or Kuki languages means 'men'. Indeed, several of these Maria clan names, e.g.

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Wachawi, are so like those of Naga clans as to tempt one to infer a connexion from a similarity or even identity which is probably merely fortuitous.

More than enough has probably been said to indicate to the reader the interest and importance of the work that follows. It is only to be regretted that no written word, even of Mr. Grigson himself nor yet even his admirable illustrations, can convey the peculiar attraction the Maria has for the stranger that enters into his gates, an attraction sensible at once even to a casual visitor among them, such as I have been, and obviously felt very strongly by the author of the monograph that follows. Let him now speak for himself.

J. H. HUTTON

Cambridge
October 11th, 1936

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Indonesia and, in India, among the Oraons and others in Chhota Nagpur and among the Nagas of Assam. In Bastar the Murias and Jhorias of Antagarh have sleeping dormitories for boys only, and repudiate with heat any suggestion that boys and girls share the same dormitory, as is the case among the Murias of north Kondagaon.[A] Nevertheless, the girls assemble every evening by the boys' *gotul*, to join in song, dance and games, and not infrequently in sexual games, and, like the boys, have *gotul* names and ranks some of which involve special duties and responsibilities. The elder boys and girls are almost prefects, charged with the duty of teaching the young the elements of the tribal culture, while all the youth have certain definite fagging to do for the whole village. The Marias of the Abujhmar have a *gotul* in every village, but it is little more than a real dormitory where all unmarried males over the age of ten or so sleep; and, except in the Fadalbhum *pargana* and portions of adjacent Maria country abutting on the plain of north-western Antagarh, the distinctive and specialized *gotul* system of training for the young of both sexes is absent. It seems almost completely absent among the Bison-horn Marias and Koyas of Bastar. Lucie-Smith does not mention it in the account of the Marias and other Gonds of Chanda district in the 1869 Settlement Report (one of the indications that the 'Marias' described by him were Koitor of the plains and foot-hills of the Ahiri and other zamindaris, not the Hill Marias of the portion of the Abujhmar mountains that overflows into south-east Chanda). It is only briefly mentioned by Russell and Hiralal in para. 71 of their article 'Gond', where it is said that 'many Gond villages in Chhattisgarh and the Feudatory States' have these '*gotalghar*' (*sic*). There is no definite record of the distribution of the *gotul* outside Bastar in the Central Provinces and the old Central Provinces States. In the *States Gazetteer* it is recorded only in Bastar and Kanker States among the 'Gonds'. I doubt whether it exists anywhere among the Gonds[1] of the Satpura mountains and other parts of the Central Provinces, including Chhattisgarh. It is a possible indication of the existence among these Muria, Jhoria and Hill Maria Koitor of Antagarh and Kondagaon Tahsils who now speak dialects of Dravidian Gondi of a strong element of pre-Dravidian or Austro-Asiatic culture; but it is contrary to expectation, if this be the case, that the *gotul* exists in embryo only among the very primitive Hill

[1] Enquiry among the Gonds along the Nagpur-Chhindwara border showed no sign of anything resembling a *gotul*; I was told, however, by an intelligent Gond that he had heard many years ago that some such thing existed somewhere beyond Deogarh in Chhindwara District. This is unverified. There is no mention of the *gotul* in any published grammars and vocabularies of Central Provinces Gondi dialects.

[A] [see cat. 116, p. 418. - Ed./pt]

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411 to the marksman's right. He stands obliquely to his target, with feet slightly apart and body bending forward over the left hip. The nock in the arrow shaft is held to the string of the bow, in the Abujhmar hills by the index and middle fingers only of the right hand unless the marksman is not strong enough not to use his third finger also; the Bison-horn Marias always use all three. The left thumb rests perpendicularly along the inner edge of the belly of the stave, the arrow resting, on the left of the stave, in the arch between the left thumb and index finger. The latter is laid lightly along the top of the shaft and pointed as a sight towards the target. The other left fingers are brought round the back of the stave. The string is then drawn to the rear by the right hand and released. No ring or other protector is worn on the thumb, though it is sometimes cut on the inner side a little above the knuckle.

Glasfurd, in para. 87 of his report, thus describes another form of release :—

> 'All the Marias . . . often use the feet in bending the bow, while they pull the string with both hands. An arrow discharged in this manner, it is said, would almost pass through the body of a man or deer: this method is only had recourse to in elevated positions, such as from the tops of rocks, hills, and precipices, upon any object below.'

Despite many enquiries, I never found a modern hill or plain Maria who could use this method. A few old men said it was used by wandering 'Nahal' hunters, now very rarely met in Bastar; none could remember it ever being used by Marias.

415 No quivers are used by any Marias. Arrows are carried in the hand, or by fixing the point of a barb in the hair-tuft, or in a cord tied round the head if bald.

534 No Marias appear ever to use a musical bow on a winnowing-fan
● 171 over a pot of water as is done by low Hindu castes and Murias around Kondagaon for the *Tija* festival in the month of Bhadon.

151 The Hill Maria slays a very occasional panther or barking-deer with his bow, but is not a good shot. The Bison-horn Maria, on the other hand, is often a deadly shot up to forty or fifty yards. A young man in a village just below the Aranpur pass, with a powerful bow of *dhaman* (*Grewia tiliaefolia*) wood at fifty paces range sent an arrow through the bullseye of a target which I set up for him against a *tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) tree; it penetrated 4 cm. into the very hard wood of that tree.

411 No other actual weapons are used by Marias, save for an occasional old sword of one of the traditional Indian *talwar* patterns which has survived the general disarming after the 1910 rebellion. But it is as well to describe here the few digging hand-tools used.

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241 the ordinary axe, and there is little or no 'waist' by the socket. It is, on a smaller scale, like the Cornish biddox.

Though this is used by some Bison-horn Marias in the remoter tracts, its use is now definitely a sign of the Hill Maria. The Bison-horn Maria uses the ordinary *korki* of the plains, which the Hill Maria calls *koṭ-gudari*; the villages on the edge of the Abujhmar hills are beginning to use it instead of the *gudari*, but it is never seen in the villages in the interior of the hills. This is a shouldered iron hoe, the blade from the shoulders to the digging edge being almost square, the sides being only slightly longer than the edge. It scores over the *gudari* because it can also be used to scoop and shovel earth.

Last must be mentioned the solid iron crowbar or digging-stick, found in all Maria houses, and throughout Bastar. But in the Abujhmar hills it is interesting to find that it is sometimes shouldered and is in form very like the Madras Sawaras' shouldered iron hoe illustrated at p. 361 of Hutton's *India Census Report* (1931). This is known to the Hill Marias as *pulu*. I have seen similar shouldered specimens occasionally among the Bison-horn Marias, and was told that they had been imported from the Malkangiri taluq of the Jeypore Agency; but there is no coming and going between that Agency and the Abujhmar hills. Of all the Marias' iron weapons and implements the *pulu* is the dearest, owing to the weight of iron used. The blacksmiths charge a rupee, the price of three *gudari* or two axes. It is generally about a metre long, and the shouldered portion is about a quarter of the total length. Plain unshouldered specimens are more common. Its chief use is for digging up the various yams and jungle roots in the rains that form so important a part of the diet of all Bastar Koitor. Or it is useful for digging holes for the posts of houses, or grubbing up stumps, etc.; it never is used as a hoe.

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The essential features of the *kala* or menstruation room have already been described.

Although also used for storing provisions and goods, the *lonu* room is essentially the room devoted to the Departed (*Hanal*), and is, indeed, often referred to as the *Hanal Kholi*, or Room of the Departed. Here in a corner rests the *Hanal Kunda* or Pot of the Departed, which it is taboo for the husband to touch, and in which the housewife deposits a little meal for the departed ancestors whenever she grinds; and here is the *Hanal O'idal*, or the Hearth of the Departed, on which she cooks the first new grain at each of the new grain eating festivals; the ashes of this are never swept away. There is never a back door to the *lonu*. As no space should be wasted, there is always an *alpanji* platform in the *lonu* for storing provisions, especially jungle produce; but it is never slept on, as women only may sleep in the *lonu*, and it is taboo for them to sleep anywhere except on the floor.

The walls of houses are generally made of vertical pole stockading. The side walls are of poles of a uniform height of from 3 to 3½ feet, while the end walls start from this height at the sides and rise to 6 or 7 feet at the centre; the latter at intervals have forked tops to support the horizontal beams parallel to the sides on which the thatched roof rests. There are generally three of these on either side of the central and highest beam, which is the roof-tree. The roof-tree is supported at intervals along its length by other fork-topped poles resting in the ground, generally built into the partitions between the rooms, or serving as posts for the inside doors, and varying accordingly in number. They are shown on the three ground-plans on page 111 in small circles along the dotted line representing the line of the roof-tree; that dotted line in the Kurmer and Handawada plans should correspond with the partitions shown closely parallel to them. The inner partitions, including those dividing one house in a long-house from another,

goddess of wealth who lives in the house, and the effect would be to drive her away. Their solicitude for this goddess is the more noticeable, as the Maria Gond's house and furniture probably constitute one of the least valuable human habitations on the face of the globe.'

Whoever gave the authors this information must have been drawing on his imagination. There is no 'goddess of wealth' among the Marias. The modern Maria becomes hilarious over the idea that it is in any way wrong to have intercourse with his wife in the house; if any consideration deterred the older generation, it was the close proximity of the *hanal kunda* (Pot of the Departed) in the *lonu* room of the house, so associated with the cult of the *hanal* or Departed.

Dr. Hutton has referred me to the account of the Kadar tribe of Cochin (*Census of India*, 1931, Vol. I, Pt. III, p. 214). The Kadar also regard (or used to regard) it as taboo to have sexual intercourse in the house, but husband and wife meet by day at a trysting place in the forest.

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764 porcupines, peacocks, fish and tigers. The carpenter had put
532 in a representation of Hanuman, but the Marias, knowing little of him, supposed it was a policeman included to emphasize Kopa's dignity.

The pillar also has, or had, pigeons on the top and there was a trident, though the Marias were ignorant of its meaning. 'It is the pole's turban,' they said. 'It is made of iron to save us the trouble of renewing it.'

It is obviously impossible to describe all these pillars[1]; in 1942 they were to be found near Chitrakot, near Killepal, at Lalaguda, near Sirisguda, at Taragaon, at Kumalnar and at Garda. I saw a very simple one at Chingner in honour of an important member of the Lekhami clan. It was standing out in the jungle by itself; there were three rows of lozenges cut in the wood near the top and a single carved pigeon above. It was still red with oil mixed with *geru*. At its foot was a flat stone supported on two others, the *hanal-garya*. From the top there hung a strip of cloth, possibly a bit of the dead man's dancing dress.

It is important to note that these pillars are closely associated with the megalithic culture of the Marias. Sometimes both a menhir and pillar are erected for the same man; sometimes the pillar stands at the end of a row of stone monuments. It is not, therefore, in any sense a substitute for the *urakhal* but a supplement to it. I have noticed a similar combination of stone and wooden monuments among the Lanjhia Saoras who have come under Kond influence. [171]

It is tempting to suppose that the various animals and birds carved on the pillar have some totemic significance, but I doubt if this is so. In the first place, every pillar has a wide variety of animals portrayed upon it; in the second the people themselves say that these animals simply represent the ordinary objects of the chase and are carved to indicate some of the interests of the dead man. Each pillar in fact attempts to be a biography in wood of the deceased.

114 These notes are desultory enough, but they do at least give me an opportunity of paying some tribute to the man whose endless docility to facts has enabled him to make so striking a contribution to science and whose great-hearted affection for the aboriginals has led him to propose a policy and establish principles which, if adopted by the National Governments of the future, will preserve freedom and happiness in the hills and forests of India. There is much that is tedious in anthropology, much that hardly seems worth while,

[1] The pillar of Marvi Oyami Masa, the homicide, is described in detail in *Maria Murder and Suicide*, p. 201.

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on their heads. They must not remove rice from the Pot of the Departed.

Page 169, *line* 33. Of the 100 cases of homicide examined in *Maria Murder and Suicide* 13 were due to intoxication by rice-beer and 6 to other liquors. In a further 14 cases of which Grigson kept notes, *landa*-intoxication led to 2 murders and other intoxicants to 3.

Page 174, *line* 5. The Murias still remember this camp and recall how Sir Montague Butler gave one of the headmen a ten rupee note as a present. That was seventeen years ago, when ten rupee notes were seldom seen. The Muria showed the note to a Forest Guard and asked him what it was. The Guard offered to buy it for a rupee, saying that was all it was worth. The Muria accepted the bargain and went off full of gratitude to the kindly Guard but doubtful of the Governor's generosity in giving him such a small reward. Quite recently a Mussalman merchant of Narayanpur was prosecuted for cheating a Muria with coloured labels which he declared were hundred rupee notes.

Page 174, *line* 9. At Dugeli I saw in 1942 a small carefully-fenced enclosure round a group of plantain trees, among which was a tall plant not unlike a sugar cane, which I was told was the 'Baiha Danda' and was used as an antidote to the bite of a mad dog. It was grown entirely for this purpose, in case the emergency should arise.

Page 174, *line* 15. The custom of blowing away disease may be illustrated by the experience of Oyami Harma of Bara Harma-munda. 'Once when I was working in my fields with some labourers I had employed, they performed magic against me and a lot of mud went into my mouth and filled my whole body. The Waddai discovered what had happened and cured me by blowing the mud out of my stomach. Another day, some people came to ask for rice. I refused at first, but they persisted and at last I had to let them have some. But they were annoyed with me and with my own rice they made hostile magic and filled my belly with it. The Waddai cured me by blowing it out.' Sucking is also practised. A Siraha places his lips on a patient's stomach and sucks. If he finds only blood in his mouth, it means a Rau has sent the disease; if there is a little earth with the blood, it indicates the Earth Mother.

Page 182, *line* 24. I have seen split-string instruments similar to the *vaddur-dol* among the Bondos and Saoras in Orissa, as well as among the Jhoria-Murias; they have been noticed for the Reddis by C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *The Reddis of the Bison Hills*, p. 348. Meerwarth reports that they are common in Malaya and Indonesia

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and are found in the Shan States—A. M. Meerwarth, *A Guide to the Collection of Musical Instruments exhibited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta* (Calcutta, 1917), pp. 5f. But the Shan instrument improves its sounding-board with a hole in the bamboo and it, as with the Reddis and Bondos, is beaten with only one hand. But the Marias and Murias use plectra in both hands, with the instrument on the ground.

Page 183, *line* 17. Beside the iron jews-harp, which is also known to the Ghotul Murias, the Bison-horn Marias use a small bamboo harp of a pattern common to the Bondos, Saoras and several Assamese tribes.

Page 183, *line* 21. The *kikir* is illustrated on page 20 of *Maria Murder and Suicide*.

Page 183, *line* 34. Hill Maria dancing is rather monotonous unless there is a great deal of it. But when several thousand gather for the festival, the scene is magnificent. Grigson has described the pattern of their dance as a long curved line moving slowly in a circle, while a group of 'song fellows' move up and down before it. On a great occasion this group of singers gradually develops into a procession as boys and girls leave the line and form up behind them. This 'column of fours' may in fact entirely absorb the line; when both remain they revolve about each other.

I saw a very attractive variant on the usual Bison-horn dance in the Konta tahsil, where the women shouldered their sticks and went round with a skip and a jump. In the Dantewara tahsil I recorded five different steps used by the women.

(1) The circle moves anti-clockwise singing '*Nowile wayale*' and the steps are: right foot to right, left foot swings back behind with a pause in mid-air while the dancing stick is thumped twice on the ground. Then right foot again, and three thumps of the stick. This step is also done to a refrain '*So-lo rela re rela*' and '*So rela re rela*'.

(2) A very simple anti-clockwise circular movement. Right foot to right and left foot to right behind it. The song is about cattle and the fields.

(3) Another circular dance with the steps going right to right, left behind to right, right to right, then left over in front of right.

(4) The feet go: left, right, left to right, a pause, the right is wagged over in front of the left and towards the left for three beats of the stick. Then it is put back on the ground to the right of the left and then left right left quickly.

(5) Left in front of right, right to right behind it, then the left in front of the right and so on. In this dance the sticks are not thumped with three beats at a time, but with single beats.

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Sori, Miriami, Kalmumi and Markami clans. My impression was that the *danyakal* stone was becoming more and more popular; it is supposed to confer a certain dignity on the family that has it; and for some reason it is said to be cheaper. Other clans which often use the *danyakal* stones are the Tati, Muchaki, Vetti, Hemla, Oyami, Birya Barse, Punem, Durro and Rawa.

Supplementary material concerning Hill and Bison-horn Maria funerary rites, will be found in my article 'Funerary Customs in Bastar State', *Man in India*, Vol. XXV. In the same volume is an important discussion on the megalithic culture of Bastar in relation to other parts of India by C. von Fürer-Haimendorf.

Page 282. Koppers has made the interesting suggestion that the unbloody sacrifice of horned cattle for the dead when an *uraskal*-menhir is erected by the Marias, is a widespread custom. 'In this matter of the unbloody killing of animals destined as a sacrifice for ancestors, there is complete agreement between Gonds, Mundas and Santals', and he refers to Bodding who says that 'sacrifices to *bongas* are performed by beheading the sacrificial animal, whilst to the forefathers it is always done by a stroke of an axe-head on the neck'. The Munda also kills horned cattle for the dead in this way. (See W. Koppers, 'Monuments to the Dead of the Bhils', *Annali Lateranensi*, Vol. VI, 1942, p. 193). But how far is this distinction really due to a desire to save the skins of horned cattle? In Orissa at least the vendors of cattle for sacrifice charge an additional sum (up to ten rupees) if the skin is not returned to them intact, with the result that in many cases the sacrifice of a cow or buffalo is unbloody while that of a goat or pig is bloody. At the erection of a menhir by the Bondos I witnessed on the same day and on the same occasion the sacrifice of a pig and a bullock for the ancestors: the first had its throat cut, the second was killed by a blow from the back of an axe in order to save the skin. The Saoras usually make unbloody sacrifices of buffaloes to the ancestors but I have seen a goat (also for the ancestors) decapitated by a sword. I suspect the economic interest is primary.

[p. 428 is blank]

[For comparison of the ghotul (communal dwelling) and its features, with those in other cultures, see category 116, pp. 269-320.]

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

262 The children, as well as older people, kill and eat frogs when they can. In
222 the rains they creep up to any small pond and with their sticks kill the frogs
252 before they are able to escape into the water. They remove the skin and stomach and roast the rest. Many people, however, only eat the hind legs, regarding the rest as dangerous. Frog's flesh is believed to be a useful [278] remedy for swollen glands.[1] Various kinds of lizards are eaten the same way. In most of the less sophisticated villages red ants are valued both for food and as a febrifuge. A party of chelik go through the forest until they see the ants' nests high up in the branches of a tree. Then one of them climbs up and breaks off or cuts all the branches on which the nests are and throws them to the ground. The others quickly prepare leaf-cups and one of them plunges his hands into the nests and fills the cups with the ants and their eggs. They brush off the eggs and tie up the ants in the cups. They bring the little bundles home and put them straight into the fire. When they have been roasted for some minutes they remove the cups, open them and squeeze the ants into a paste. They add salt and chilli and put the mixture back into the fire to bake. This chutney, which is very tasty, with a sharp clean taste, is generally eaten with liquor. At the beginning of the rains the Muria also catch the flying white ants, pull off their wings and fry the bodies.[2]

Other delicacies are the grubs which are found in the date-palm. These large white grubs are sought after by many others beside the Muria, and are bought even by high-caste Hindus in the bazaars for as much as two pice apiece. They are fried and eaten and sometimes oil is extracted from them.

262 The Muria also enjoy catching and eating the river crab, 'the blacksmith
276 that takes his pincers and hammer about with him', 'the Raja who has hands
524 and feet but lacks a head'.[3] Shrimps and prawns are common in the streams; a prawn is described as 'the boy with eight feet, twelve shoulders and sixteen horns'.

262 Most of these delicacies, fried with a little chilli, are used as 'savouries' when the people go to drink salphi juice or other liquor. Men and boys going in the evening towards the sago-palms may be seen carrying little leaf-bundles containing fried frogs, grubs and a chutney of red ants. These relieve the sweetness of the salphi juice and the unpleasant taste of the mahua spirit.

262 Beef is still eaten in all parts of Bastar, even by the sophisticated Raja
843 Muria who are so loud in their protests that they have abandoned it. An interesting story connects the practice with the *dohada* cravings of pregnancy. The Muria theory, which is the old Hindu theory, is that it is the child in the womb who is responsible for the mother's irrational desires. 'A Brahmin woman six months pregnant had a craving for beef and went to a Ganda to get some. For fear of the husband he refused, but his wife gave her two

[1] Crooke has an interesting note on frog-eating. The Musahar of Mirzapur, he says, [171] eat two kinds, a small and a large, at marriages. 'The Burmese certainly eat them and boiled frogs are said to be exposed for sale in their bazaars. I hear that the Burmese prisoners in the Benares jail have been caught eating them alive. Mr Bower tells me that he knows of Salees in Oudh fattening frogs for food in earthen jars.'—*N.I. Notes and Queries*, Vol. II, p. 78.

[2] In South India ants are believed to be a tonic; there is a Tamil proverb that 'If [171] you eat a thousand ants, you will get the strength of an elephant'. A paste made with ants is recorded as being used with curry in Kanara. Winged termites are widely eaten, and sometimes their bodies are sun-dried and stored. The queen termite is considered a special delicacy, fried or raw; Tamil athletes are said to keep themselves in trim by swallowing it raw and then sprinting a couple of miles. See S. T. Moss, 'Ants and Folk-Beliefs in South India', *Man in India*, Vol. VIII, pp. 108.

[3] The viscous substance adhering to the carapace of a crab is believed to be good for [278] ear-aches.

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had to give a penalty feast to its tribe. It had everything ready save char nuts. When it heard where Waddai was going, it promised to cure his son if he would give it the nuts. The monkey went to the house, pretended to fall into a trance, shaking its head and body, and the boy at once recovered. The monkey told Waddai that he should always cure disease in this way.

'The sun had now set and Waddai went half-way with the monkey to see it home. It was very pleased with the nuts and took Waddai to a honey-comb, drove away the bees and gave the sweet juice and wax to him. Since that day, we have eaten honey and as Waddai took the first honey at night, we take it then also.'

The Muria distinguish four kinds of bees: the *bāgh ondār*, which live on big trees; the *satāru ondār*; the small *kitka ondār* and the *lokti ondār* or *mas*.[1] It is said that the hives of the *bāgh* and *satāru ondār* are discovered when they go according to their habit to get water from a trickling stream. Men go along the stream until they notice bees coming and going and then try to follow them home. The *lokti* are easier to find because they sit buzzing outside their hole, and the honey-gatherer is attracted to the place by the noise. Muria observation is shown by this account: 'All the swarm seek flowers and suck their sweet juice. As the bees sit on the flowers gum sticks to their feet. With this they build their hive, and put the juice inside. They build so well that not a drop leaks out.'

'Only a brave man will go for honey', say the Muria. When they have located a hive, two or three men go together; for the *bāgh ondār* (which are blind in the dark) they go at night. They tie grass at the end of a pole, light it and smoke out the bees. Then they place a bamboo ladder against the tree and climb up, though sometimes they cut the tree down to save themselves trouble, and collect the honey in hollow bamboo tubes.

The honey is eaten with wheat-cakes or mixed with flour and made into a sweet bread which is greatly liked by children.

Sometimes if the honey-gatherer is unsuccessful in finding a hive, he engages the Siraha or Gunia who searches for it with the help of the winnowing-fan or bits of grass. When he climbs the tree to get the honey, he calls upon the Dead to assist him.

Should a swarm make their hive in or near a house, it is considered very lucky.[2]

The Muria's interest in honey-gathering is indicated by the number of riddles about it.[3]

[1] Compare Thurston on the Kond: 'The Khonds recognise four different kinds of bees, known by the following Oriya names: (*a*) *bhaga mashu*, a large-sized bee (*Apis dorsata*); (*b*) *sathapuri mashu*, building its comb in seven layers (*Apis indica*); (*c*) *binchina mashu*, with a comb like a fan; (*d*) *nihiti mashu*, a very small bee.'—Thurston, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 363. I have found similar classifications among the Juang and Gadaba.

[2] 'It is considered very lucky if bees or white ants take up their abode in an empty house or at the gate of the city.'—*N.I. Notes and Queries*, Vol. V (1895), p. 52. See also ibid., p. 90. Many Naga actually hang the combs of bees or wasps in front of their houses, perhaps to frighten away wild cats: the Sema say they help to hatch hen's eggs; the Thado Kuki say they ward off evil spirits. Hutton recalls similar beliefs in the Andamans and Malaya, and adds 'I am disposed to suspect the survival of a definitely Negrito belief in the practice of hanging the combs of bees or wasps in the entrance of houses'.—J. H. Hutton, *Diaries of Two Tours in the Unadministered Area east of the Naga Hills* (Calcutta, 1929), p. 6.

[3] A Kharia riddle about the honeycomb: 'In a golden box bells are sounding: when you open it, you get sweet bread.'—S. C. Roy, *The Kharias* (Ranchi, 1937), Vol. II, p. 499.

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THE COURSE OF MURIA LIFE: AGE

Gudding ada hidu ra,	It came hiding in the grass,
Hupa lakha poyindu ra.	It caught him like a rat.
Hojir rupiya ta jiua ra.	The soul is worth a thousand rupees.
Jiua nukain kili ra.	You have destroyed the soul.
Ade jiua pallo ra.	The soul cannot return again.
Bada diya ta puja ra?	What offering did he fail to give?
Puja badu barah matar ra?	Did he fail to give what he had promised?
Adenk ise titi ra?	Was that why you ate him?
Nima gala tinavi ra.	But it wasn't you who ate him.
Nikuna ijor itan ra.	I said it was you (but I was wrong).
Hongu dapu dyma ra:	Don't be angry:
Sili barang johar ra.	I give you a sevenfold greeting.

Use Mudial Pen is acquitted, and now Hirto Mudial Pen is accused in exactly the same words. He too is found innocent and the singers, afraid that they may have angered him, beg him not to be offended and greet him seven times with their Johar. Then in the song as I have it recorded, Muyang Waddai is accused—presumably of black magic—then Lingo Mudial Pen, Kara Harra Pen, the Rau of Tipagarh, the Kandra Kaniya, the Rau of Raughat, the Mata of the man's own home, and finally Ispural. Of Ispural, which is a variant on Mahapurub or Bhagavan, the Supreme Being in whose hands are the issues of life and death, it is said,

Nimdy ise titi ra.	It was you who ate him.
Hayna hago asatu ra;	The time of his death had come;
Adenk ise oti ra.	That was why you took him.

But even Ispural is proved innocent, and at last the singers decide that it was the dead man's own ancestors, the Departed of his own house, who desired his company and sent the tiger to bring him.

Lota ise mudiyilor ra,	The ancient of the house,
Abo ise titur ra,	It was he who ate him,
Jori jandila otung ra.	To gain a companion for himself.
Mithun jori titur ra,	He left our companion behind,
Tenko ise otung ra.	That was why he took him.[1]

XVII. The Danger of the Abnormal: The Ondar Muttai

Throughout India the ghost of a woman who has died in pregnancy, in child-birth or immediately after child-birth is feared and dreaded.[2] The

[1] Russell and Hiralal have many accounts of the precautions taken by various tribes after a man has been killed by a tiger, some of which resemble those of the Muria. They describe the rites of the Baiga (Russell and Hiralal, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 84), Bhattra (II, p. 274), Dumal (II, p. 536), Gond (III, p. 81 and III, p. 93), Halba (III, p. 274), Kalanga (III, p. 308), Kawar (III, p. 396), Kurmi (IV, p. 79), Panwar (IV, p. 346), Samia (IV, p. 496) and Sevara (IV, p. 483). There is no particular reason in most cases why the customs recorded should be peculiar to the various tribes, nor why they should be recorded for some tribes and not for others. Probably very similar rites are common throughout the Central Provinces and indeed most of aboriginal India.

S. C. Roy has described the rites of the Uraon and I have described a Baiga ceremony that I personally witnessed in the Pendaria Zamindari (*The Baiga*, pp. 298ff.). According to Russell and Hiralal, the Gond and Halba resemble the Muria in suspending a ring over a pot of water, which they watch till it falls. The Bhattra, Kawar, Uraon and others dress a man as a tiger and either tie him up, banish him or force him to release his prey, with the idea that what is done in symbol will be achieved in effect.

[2] The Churails or Churel, as this ghost is called elsewhere, is a familiar figure in Indian ethnographic literature. One of the earliest accounts is by Crooke, op. cit., Vol. I,

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115 reason for this may be that just as the ghosts of virgins and the unmarried are dangerous because they have missed the most delightful, the most exciting, the most interesting thing in life and are therefore supposed to be anxious after death to revenge themselves on mankind, so also the woman who dies during the process of parturition is suddenly deprived of the chief privilege and wonder of womanhood—the joy of being a mother. Bitter and disappointed she seeks an appalling vengeance upon men.

In Bastar this fearful being is known in Halbi as Churlin or Bandrini and sometimes as Raksin or Banra-raksin. The Muria, however, know her as Ondar Muttai. This means the Old Bee Woman, implying I think that she comes upon a man with the ferocity and speed of a swarm of bees.

The Ondar Muttai is described with every circumstance of fear and horror.[1] She has only one breast, so long that it is usually slung over her shoulder. She has teeth long as the palm of your hand, an enormous head, great round eyes, a bulbous nose and ears like winnowing-fans. Her feet are red as fire, but curiously enough are not described as turned back to front as in the rest of India. She dances with her breast flung across her back and calls to men to come to her. When they hear her voice their legs tremble and fail beneath them. She lives in the forest or on the bank of a lake, and on the day the cuckoo first sings you can see her eyes across the water. In some villages, there is a belief that you are safe as long as you are in the company of buffaloes.

The Ondar Muttai appears to human beings in several different forms. Towards women and children she nearly always displays her dangerous and terrifying aspect. When a child is born and the placenta is not expelled, the ghost of the mother after death pursues young children. She catches them and carries them about, holding them against her breast. This is so terrible that the children weep and weep and cannot be consoled.

When the Ondar Muttai catches a man, sometimes she tickles him until he is so weak and exhausted that she can do her will upon him. Sometimes she says to him, 'Will you eat black *gur* or white *gur*?' If he answers, 'I'll

171 pp. 264ff., who stresses her reversed feet and her power of destroying young men. Russell and Hiralal describe Churel superstitions and precautions among the Gurao who bury a lemon under the corpse, and the Kurmi who place thorns above it. Russell and Hiralal, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 18of. and IV, p. 78.

The Uraon believe that the Churel destroys men by tickling them—S. C. Roy, *Oraon Religion and Customs* (Ranchi, 1928), p. 96—and Dehon describes how they prevent the return of the ghost by twisting round the feet of the corpse and driving long thorns into them. They bury the body face downwards with the bones of a donkey.—P. Dehon, *The Religion and Customs of the Uraons, Mem. ASB*, Vol. I (1905-7), pp. 139f. The Birhor, like the Muria, do not admit the Churel to the company of the ancestral dead and only women may bury the corpse.—S. C. Roy, *The Birhors* (Ranchi, 1925), pp. 267ff. The Santal Churin licks the flesh from a man's bones. At burial long thorns are driven into her feet to prevent her running after her victims.—C. H. Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas* (London, 1909), p. 411. The Chenchu appear almost unique in burying such women 'in the usual manner'.—C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, *The Chenchus* (Bombay, 1943), p. 154.

Frazer has collected many references to similar beliefs for the Lushai, Kachin, Shan, Palaung as well as for the Malaya, the Kayan of Borneo and the Kiwai of British New Guinea among others. Similar ideas are found again among the peoples of Northern Nigeria and Rhodesia and even among the ancient Mexicans. Possibly the fears and superstitions gathering about this ghost are world-wide. See, for full references, J. G. Frazer, *The Fear of the Dead in Primitive Religion* (London, 1936), Vol. III, pp. 182ff.

[1] The Kharia believe that her malignant power 'is believed to be foreshadowed by the trouble she gave to her people in her last days of life, the degree of deformity and fearfulness that her features assume on death and the trouble that her corpse, by the violent contortions of its limbs on its way to the grave, gives to the pall-bearers'.—S. C. Roy, *The Kharias* (Ranchi, 1937), p. 302.

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MURIA RELIGION

The Gods of the Home

Among the Muria, specially those towards the east and round Kondagaon, there is a definite belief that certain gods are attached to men and women and go about with them sharing their life and helping when help is needed. At Kanera the Muria said that Dokara Deo lives with men and aids them in distress, while Kondi or Lagar Deo lives with women. At Dongrigura the Pujari said that the gods themselves do not accompany men everywhere but 'their shadows come to them on the wind' always ready to help in danger. At Karanji the people said that whatever god receives special honour rewards his worshippers by living with them but that Budha Deo, Kondi Deo and Lagar Deo, who came with the Raja of Bastar from Warangal to protect him, are the special gods who go here and there to guard human beings.

The fact that this belief is mainly confined to the more sophisticated (though still truly Muria) villages near Kondagaon suggests that it is a Hindu importation along the main road from the Central Provinces.

Kondi Deo goes with a girl[1] to her husband's house on the day she is married. After the birth of the first child, any misfortune that comes is attributed to this god and the family has to promise to worship him on condition that he troubles them no more. They wait for a year and then the woman's married sisters come to visit her and subscribe sufficient money to buy a pig.

On a Saturday the house is cleaned and the next morning a *chok* pattern is made in the compound with rice-flour, in the middle of which some rice is placed. A small earthen pot is put there and a knife. The head of the family offers incense and makes the pig eat the rice saying, 'O Kondi Deo, protect and preserve my family and children. It is for their sake that this offering is made to you, and we will repeat it every second year'. When the pig has eaten the rice, the husband of either the eldest or the youngest sister kills it. They cook the pig and invite the village elders to the feast. A pit is dug inside the house into which, when the feast is over, the leaf-plates, the pig's bones and even the water in which the cooking-pots are washed, must be thrown. They then hang the earthen pot and the knife near the Pot of the Departed.

The worship of Lagar Deo is not unlike that of Narayan Deo to whom the Laru pig is dedicated in the Central Provinces.[2] Lagar Deo is also a special god of women and is indeed often identified with Kondi Deo. He first lives with the mother of a household, but after the marriage of the eldest daughter he goes with her to her new home. When her child is born he first troubles the mother and then goes to each of her married sisters and troubles their female children. When they decide to appease him they ask all the female members of the family, sisters, sister's daughters, grand-daughters, all of them, and

her. The Koyi dance is an imitation of Bhimador's pursuit of his enemies); R. B. Bainbridge, 'The Sacrifice of the Rajmahal Hills', *Mem. ASB.* Vol. II, pp. 468.

Other legends about Bhimsen may be found in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, Vol. II, pp. 29 and 135 (for Bhimsen's romance with a Devi); A. Cunningham, *Archaeological Reports*, Vol. XXII, p. 53 (the pillar of Asoka near Betiya locally regarded as Bhimsen's walking-stick); ibid., Vol. XVI, p. 16 (the lion pillar at Rakhra known as the pole of the bedstead of Bhimsen); an interesting and well-told story in R. A. Sterndale, *Seonee* (Calcutta, 1877), p. 97.

[1] Among the Uraon, Achrael and her companion Joda are the special deities of women. Once in a generation, every family must perform a ceremony for the well-being of its female children. As in Bastar, all female relatives and their husbands attend. For a full description, see S. C. Roy, *Oraon Religion and Customs* (Ranchi, 1928), pp. 65ff.

[2] See *The Baiga*, pp. 403ff. and articles by Shamrao Hivale and Durga Bhagwat in *Man in India*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 92–119.

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776 dedicate a pig by castrating it and removing a bit of the ear and tail. They wash its legs and throw rice at it saying, 'If you are a true god, give us prosperity, keep us safe and after so many years we will give you gifts'. Then the pig is set free and allowed to go where it will. The rice which was thrown at it is carefully divided and given to each of the husbands of the woman's younger sisters. They are to sow this every year, and at the end of three years to bring whatever has been produced. The men sow this seed in a special patch of ground, harvest it and store it separately, repeating the process every year. When they are ready they appoint a certain member of the family as the Kotwar for this special duty and he goes round to the houses of all those relations who three years before had shared in the ceremony. Once again all the female members of the family must come. Every household invited must bring a chicken.

On the appointed day each of the husbands comes with the rice that he has grown. They dig a pit and bring the dedicated pig. After making it eat rice as usual, they beat it over the head with a rice-husker and so kill it. The men invited to the feast may eat the pork, but the only women who may do so are those who were present at the original ceremony. Sometimes an interval of five years is allowed between the dedication of the pig and its sacrifice.

In some places the earthen pot with rice, pulse and a small knife is always kept near the House of the Departed to satisfy Kondi Pen.

The Divine Motiári

776 Throughout India the villagers dread and take endless trouble to placate the
●171 Matal or Village Mothers.[1] These dangerous and malignant beings are the cause of disease, domestic tragedy and accident. It would be an interesting subject for psycho-analytic research to discover why the beautiful name 'Mother' should be given to these bloodthirsty deities.

But beside the Mothers there are the Maidens. These too are known in other parts of India.[2] In northern Bastar at least, as we might expect in a country populated by charming and graceful motiari, the Maidens or Kanyang are generally regarded as benevolent though, like the motiari, they expect to receive proper attention. It is not, I think, fanciful to call these the 'Divine Motiari' and indeed the seven chief Kanyang Sisters have the names Belosa, Dulosa, Alosa, Sulki, Lahari, Jalko and Malko, all of which are the titles of motiari. It is said that in the ghotul these titles are specially treasured and fortunate since they are the names of the Kanyang in whose honour the girls dance the Diwali dances.

776 There are Naiads, Kanyang, Divine Motiari—call them what you will—of the forest and of the water. One Kanyang lives in the sago-palm; another flashes across the sky in the shape of lightning; another presides over the salt-lick. In all they number seven score.

Let us examine some of them and their character more carefully. Perhaps the most important of the Kanyang is the Yer Kanyang, the rather lonely maiden who lives in streams and rivers. When she hears the music of the dance floating across at night from the nearest ghotul, she grows very sad and goes to find some motiari living wretched and ashamed because of the menstrual contagion that is on her. Then the two dance together in the world of dreams all night. This maiden is honoured by the Muria when they go to fish. Gifts are promised before they begin and if the catch is good they always remember her. When Gadru of Chaniyagaon was nearly drowned as a child, the Siraha

[1] See Crooke, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 112ff.
[2] See Dalton, op. cit., p. 248; Thurston, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 112.

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791 considerably weakened and the sensations become very dull and dim. The higher
781 centres of the brain seem to be partially split off from the incoming sensory currents, on the one hand, and from the motor centres, on the other'.[1] At the same time, the mental state becomes more and more simple and the many objects of normal consciousness gradually tend to give way to a state of monoideism. These mediums are undoubtedly out of their wits; they can hurl themselves about and fall with a force that would injure men in an ordinary state of consciousness.[2]

825 It is interesting to find that in Bastar as elsewhere throughout the world this ecstatic condition is associated with the horse. 'It is not only in Java
●171 and Bali', writes Beryl de Zoëte, 'that the hobby-horse is associated with trance. The wonderful Roumanian Calusari, the little horsemen, the Good Fairies who dramatically fight the Wicked One in their ecstatic dance, have as one of their principal functions the exorcism of evil spirits who bring disease, just like the Koeda Kepand (rattan horses) of Java and the Sanghyang Djaran of Bali. And this function is exercised through an abnormal state of consciousness which at a certain degree of intensity we call trance, and in some cases through the medium of a wooden or rattan horse, or merely the head and tail of a horse united by some kind of rod . . . Perhaps there is no continent in which the hobby-horse is unknown. In England he seems innocent enough, ambling along among the mysterious antlered figures of Abbot's Bromley, or through many a French folk-dance.'[3]

The horse has long been used in magic. Tacitus and Camden referred to augury by the horse in the ancient world. It has been said that the Wooden Horse of Troy was 'an instrument of magic rather than military tactics'.[4] Armed horsemen in Arabia in more recent times are quoted as riding round the tent in which a child is to be born and showing clearly by their arms, horses and movements that they are trying to frighten away evil spirits at a vitally important time.[5] In India the worship of the horse has been recorded for certain aboriginal tribes. For example, Hislop says that throughout the Nagpur District at his time (*circa* 1860) everyone worshipped Koda Pen, and a god named Kola Sur was worshipped with an offering of earthen horses on the top of a hill near Great Ambora.[6] The mare-headed goddess, Basali, represented with a horse's head or as a wooden horse, is worshipped by the Keots and allied tribes in Orissa.[7] The Bhil represent their dead as riding on

[1] J. B. Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness* (New York, 1923), p. 424.

[2] With the Bastar trance we may compare the 'jerks' which have been described by a contemporary in a revival in South Carolina in 1803. Persons would 'suddenly fall to the ground, and become strangely convulsed with what was called the jerks; the head and neck, and sometimes the body also, moving backwards and forwards with spasmodic violence, and so rapidly that the plaited hair of a woman's head might be heard to crack . . And then there was the jumping exercise in which several persons might be seen standing perfectly erect, and springing upward without seeming to bend a joint of their bodies.' —N. I. White, *American Negro Folk-songs* (Harvard, 1928), p. 43, quoting Bishop Capers. This would be a good description of the Muria trance.

[3] W. Spies and B. de Zoëte, *Dance and Drama in Bali* (London, 1938), p. 78.

[4] W. F. J. Knight, 'Myth and Legend of Troy' in *Folk-Lore*, Vol. XLVI, p. 98, who cites L. Malten in *Jarkb. d. deutsch. arch. Inst.*, Vol. XIX (1905), pp. 179ff. as authority for 'the dangerous and demoniac associations of the horse in early times'.

[5] Ibid., p. 109.

[6] Hislop, *op. cit.*, Part IV, p. iii. See also V. Ball, *Jungle Life in India* (London, 1880), p. 83.

[7] P. Sen, 'A Basali Folk-Song', *Man in India*, Vol. XII, pp. 173ff. and S. C. Mitra, 'On a Curious Cult of Orissa', *JASB*, Vol. XXX, p. 19.

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horseback; so do the Korku on their carved memorial tablets.[1] The Muria often offer horses of clay or brass (Fig. 24) at their shrines. Sir Lewis Fermor

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After a photograph by G. F. Ramadier

FIG. 25. Gond shrine near Naghir, Chanda District

discovered a remarkable iron horse among clay horses offered to a village god on the top of a hill of manganese-ore in the Chhindwara District, which he thought might be compared with the horse offered to the Southern Indian deity Iyenar.[2]

One of the oldest of Indian sacrifices is the *aswamedha*, or horse-sacrifice, which has been traced to Scythia. 'There has always', says Penzer, 'been a close connexion between horses and the sea-god, and also with the sun. The latter connexion is due not merely, I think, to the fact that the horse was the "vehicle"—of the sun-god, but because, through its swiftness, strength and activity, it was itself a symbol of the sun.' Penzer gives an account of the rite, which included the horse's consecration and its release for a year's wandering before the actual sacrifice. After its death, the queen lay with the animal so that its great powers of fertility might be transferred to her.[3] Frazer describes rites for the horse among the Russians and Chinese.[4] The Greeks sacrificed horses to the sea-god.

This association of the horse with magic, worship and sacrifice provides a background to its connexion with divination and ecstatic trance among the

[1] See W. Koppers, 'Monuments to the Dead of the Hills and Other Primitive Tribes in Central India', *Annali Lateranensi*, Vol. VI (1942), passim; D. H. Gordon, 'Korku Memorial Tablets', *Man*, 1936, Vol. XIX.

[2] L. Fermor, 'An Iron Horse from the Central Provinces', *JRASB*, Vol. II (1936), pp. 211–14.

[3] *The Ocean of Story*, Vol. IV, pp. 14–16.

[4] *Pantheon*, Vol. IV, pp. 1971.

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825 Garo at their great annual festival of the ingathering of the harvest called the *Wangala* or *Gurusala*. At the climax of the Gond-Pardhan ceremony of the
171 Laru Kaj in Mandla the 'horses of the god' perform an ecstatic dance.[1]

This custom of making horses to dance with may be compared to that of the Buryat shamans of Baikal (Siberia) who use horse-staves made of wood or iron, the upper part being bent with a horse-head carved on it, while the middle part of the stick forms the knee-joints of the horse, and the lower end is fashioned into a hoof. Bells are tied to the horse-staves and 'to make it look more realistic' miniature stirrups are added. They represent the horses on which the shaman rides to the Upper and Lower Worlds. In its power of inducing trance the horse-stave appears to be connected with the drum which is often covered with horse-hide.[2]

825 I have noticed very similar customs among the Muria. Lingo Pen has two
532 horses always kept in his shrine at Semurgaon. These are decorated roots of
787 trees which have been chosen because their shape resembles that of a horse's
791 head. At the festivals of the god, these 'horses' are carried about by the mediums and are used both for divination and to stimulate trance. Decorated staves representing horses are carried by many of the chelik when they attend the clan festivals in the Abujhmar foot-hills. In one village, Kanher, members of the Gandu sept have a special relation with the wooden horse of Bara Pen. At Metawand I watched for several hours the antics of a medium who was carrying on his shoulders the wooden horse of his clan-god and at Bandopal a medium carrying an imaginary horse on his shoulder 'ambled, caracoled, pranced and plunged' for two miles before my slow-moving car as we made our way into the jungle for the Marka Pandum. 'The god rides upon him', they told me, 'and he cannot stop dancing for days at a time.' At a wedding in Malakot, I saw a medium riding on a characteristic hobby-horse; and again in the Dhurwa country to the south, I saw a man dancing astride a similar wooden hobby-horse. In both cases the rider would fall into trance if anything went wrong with the proceedings and would be able to diagnose the supernatural cause of the trouble.

This association of the horse with trance may be due to the dignity and beauty of the animal or to its swiftness, or possibly because it is regarded as a fertility offerings symbol.

'Three experiences', says Campbell, 'combine to make the horse a leading guard against the Evil Eye. To horse-owning peoples, his willing strength, intelligence, spirit and devotion make the horse the guardian of the higher or self-sacrificing type. Among tribes to whom the horse is strange, his size, power and fury make him a friend requiring and rewarding the process of squaring. To all who have dealings with the horse, his nervousness, his delicacy, his liability to strange sweatings and other sudden sicknesses shew that the horse is a favourite home for spirit-influence.'[3]

IX. The Cure of Disease

765 Where the trouble is sickness, there seems to be what would be regarded elsewhere as a definite element of 'suggestion' in the Siraha's treatment. In December 1940, I was lying very ill in my camp at Metawand. The Pargana

[1] Cf. Shamrao Hivale, 'The Laru Kaj', *Man in India*, Vol. XXIV (1944), p. 122.
[2] M. A. Czaplicka, *Aboriginal Siberia* (Oxford, 1914), p. 224, quoting Agapitoff and Khangalof.
[3] J. M. Campbell, 'Notes on the Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom', *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXX (1901), p. 100.

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as it was under its leaf-cup, they proceed to dig holes to take the four corner pillars of the house. If, as they dig, they come across white ants they move the site. They put four pillars into the holes and tie a garland of mango leaves round them. After this they proceed to build in the usual way.

At Phunder the boys put a grass 'top-knot' on the roof and a small flag, the *chelik-baireg* or Palo Pen, so that 'all might know it was a ghotul'.

Such are the main types of building; what of the decorations and the furniture? These vary greatly from place to place. They are least ornate to the north and east, most carefully imagined and executed in the west central pargunas, in the typical Jhoria area.

Doors are sometimes very small, sometimes large and heavy, occasionally of light bamboo, sometimes carved as at Bandopal; sometimes there is no door at all. Often there is an arrangement for shutting the door from inside—a latch falls into a wooden hook attached to the door. But it is interesting that there is no means of shutting the house from outside: the ghotul is never locked up. It is a shrine and no one would steal from it.

As you move west across the centre of the Muria country you find more, and more elaborate carving. The ghotul has stimulated artistic creation, not only in the realm of personal adornment but also in wall-painting and wood-carving. The *chelik* desire that their ghotul really should be 'lovely as a bison's horns'. In many of the Jhoria ghotul there are excellently carved pillars. These may be seen at Almer, Nayanar, Remawand, Amgaon, Bandopal, Malinar, Kober and elsewhere. At Almer, one of the pillars has *siddari* birds at the top, another has tortoises. On the body of the pillars are carvings of the moon, boys and girls dancing the Hulki, elephants. Down the pillar there are three *pidhs*, the seats that are supposed to hold it up. At Amgaon also, each of the pillars has four of these *pidhs* 'for the roof to sit on'. At Nayanar, one of the pillars is decorated with tortoises and another has hooded snakes projecting from all four corners. In Malinar, there are carvings on all the pillars—combs beautifully fashioned, a boy with a large phallus, a realistic bow and arrow, a snake. Outside, as at Remawand, there are pillars in the fence with remarkable designs clearly illustrated in Plate LXXII. At Jhakri I saw a fine pillar ingeniously carved to make a wooden ball inside with no way of putting it in or taking it out. At Binjhe too the Sirdar had carved some good pillars and had made windows in the ghotul with serrated bars.

Phallic symbols are very common.[1] In nearly every ghotul there is somewhere the representation of the vagina, often about two feet from the ground

[1] Similar phallic symbols occur in the Juang and Bondya and in some Uraon dormitories. The Juang often make a row of hemata right across the main beam of the roof. So do the Kond. Hatton describes carvings of men and women 'in a condition of sexual excitement' in Naga morung.—Hutton, *Diaries*, op. cit., p. 48.

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and gave me liquor to drink. I made Johar to all the chelik and motiari and never entered the ghotul again.

Three years after marriage I gave birth to a male child, but with great difficulty, for the Sirdar who loved me very much after all the years we were together in the ghotul and who had wanted me to run away with him, was angry at my marrying someone else and sent magic to trouble me. When I recovered, the Sirdar made my husband ill instead, but the Siraha cured him.

Another old woman over sixty years old, Kachari of Kanhargaon, remembers the ghotul of that village while it was still *jodidār*; a few years later the rules were changed on account of a scandal.

My ghotul husband was the Likhen; I was the Chaiko. But the boy I really loved was the Salya. One day while I was going to the ghotul, I met the Salya and went with him to a field. The Sirisdar and Beldar saw us and reported the matter to the Kotwar. That night the chelik refused to let me enter the ghotul, and the Kotwar and some others questioned me outside the door, accusing me of having had intercourse with the Salya in the field.

The Diwan said that as a punishment every chelik would have me that night, but just then a constable came to the Paik-gudi and the Diwan had to go and fetch him wood, so I escaped. But the Kotwar tried to have intercourse with me during the night. I resisted him, and in the morning he was very angry and told the Diwan what had happened. The next evening five of the chelik had me one after another, and in spite of all my cries and struggles I could not get free. The other motiari watched, but did nothing to help me.[1]

When I was sixteen years old I was betrothed to a chelik at Bara Dongar, but I eloped with the Salya. We were about to get married at Bandopal, when a search party caught us, and I was taken home and immediately married to my betrothed. Later I left him for a very handsome chelik from my old ghotul whom I met in the bazaar. Four years later I went mad as a result of the magic of my first husband, but the Siraha cured me.

IV

Yet in spite of such occasional breaches of the rules, the *jodidār* ghotul remains a school of marital fidelity. Severe penalties attach to the discovery of the cloth of a girl other than your own on a mat or to the taking advantage

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[1] Roy describes a similar act of corporate violation as a punishment inflicted on a girl in the Oraon *dhumkuria*. 'Should a girl refuse to come when sent for, a number of young boys are dispatched to bring her by force. When she is brought, should she refuse to elect a mate, a number of older boys violate her one after the other, until she names the boy she would have for her mate.'—S. C. Roy, *The Oraons*, p. 246. Sir E. A. Gait wrote: 'I have been told that if an Oraon girl is thought unduly coy all the youths of the village combine against her and get her deflowered by one or more of their number.'—J. G. Fraser, *Totemism and Exogamy*, Vol. II, p. 287n. In the Kondabera ghotul, there was once a 'strike' and the girls, so the chelik told me, 'decided not to let us have them. We all decided to take them by force one night, and so we did'. But I doubt if this often happens either in Bastar or Chota Nagpur. I have, however, found parallel incidents among the Gond and Pardhan of Mandla. It is perhaps worth noting that if a Bororo Indian suspected his wife of infidelity, he put her at the disposal of the young men in the *bakito*-dormitory.—V. Frič and F. Radin, 'Contributions to the Study of the Bororo Indians', *JAI*, Vol. XXXVI (1906), p. 290.

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The pubic hairs, reference to which can be made the most inflammatory of insults, are entirely removed by girls. They are supposed to smear the hairs with wood-ash and pull them out. 'If a woman uses a razor for this', we were told at Phauda, 'she will become very heavy after death, and the men who carry out her body will laugh and say, "She's one of those who used a razor".'[1]

III. Combs

Betle marrāla pungār pay ānta

On a dry tree blossoms a flower—A comb

In the intimate life of chelik and motiari the comb plays a most important part. It is used every night by the motiari when they tidy the hair of the boys. It is used to titillate the skin of back and arms. In many places it is one of the most popular forms of personal adornment. Both boys and girls wear it but it is essentially a girl's possession and a girl's decoration. In Binjhli I remember seeing a row of girls walking in file; each of them had ten or fifteen combs arranged in lines on the left side of the head. But there is no rule about this. Sometimes the combs are in the back hair, sometimes on both sides. Boys wear one or two combs in the turban, or stuck in the back hair.

Different types of comb are illustrated in Figs. 67-70, 74-5, and 80-1. I believe the patterns are simply for decorative purposes and have no magical significance. Thurston has an interesting passage, which unfortunately he does not illustrate, about the strikingly similar designs of the combs of the Negritos of Malacca and the Kadir of the Anaimalai Hills.[2] Preuss had worked out a theory that the patterns were not geometrical, but consisted of a series of hieroglyphics.[3] Thurston, however, believed that the Kadir comb decorations were only conventional. The bamboo combs worn by Semang women are said to be talismans against disease,[4] but neither Kadir nor Muria combs seem to have this meaning. The Muria combs are often carved with phallic symbols—but their aim is not magical, but the very practical one of arousing sexual interest.[5]

For a girl to possess a large number of combs does not necessarily mean that she is specially popular; more probably it implies that she has a very

[1] With this may be compared a Gond proverbial saying recorded in Mandla. 'The eaters lifted up the pubic hairs to make the corpse lighter, but found it made no difference.'

[2] Thurston, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 276.

[3] K. T. Preuss, 'Die Zauberbilder Schriften der Negrito in Malaya' in *Globus*, 1899. Schebesta, however, considers that this, like the flower-pattern theory of Vaughan Stevens, is 'entirely baseless'. P. Schebesta, 'The Decorative Art of the Aborigines of the Malay Peninsula', *JRAS* (1929), p. 749. (See Fig. 76)

[4] W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula* (London, 1906), Vol. I, pp. 306ff. For the magical significance of the comb, see also J. F. Campbell, *Popular Tales* (London, 1890), Vol. I, p. lxxi; L. Garnett, *Greek Folk Poesy* (London, 1896), Vol. II, p. 437. The occurrence of the comb on early Celtic monuments points to the value set on it. See Macculloch, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

[5] In several tribes, the gift of a comb is an essential part of the marriage ceremony. This is so among the Mnduvar.—Thurston, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 93. The Kadir bridegroom should always make a comb and present it to his future wife just before marriage or at the end of the ceremony.—*Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 28. At a Kuki marriage, the priest presents husband and wife with small combs. 'Combs, perhaps these particular combs, are very sacred things. It is very unlucky to lose them, and man and wife only may use the same comb. When a man dies, his comb is buried with him, and his near relations break their combs and must roam with dishevelled hair for a few days before they renew them.'—Dalton, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

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It may be of interest to compare these penalties with the disciplinary measures taken in other village dormitories. There is a curious account in an old book on the Chittagong Hill Tract by Captain Lewin, who was Deputy Commissioner of this area and seems to have been a man of considerable sympathy and knowledge.

> In the village communities, even as the adults have a recognised head, so also is there a head boy appointed to control the boys of the village. This head of the juvenile community is called the *goung*. I shall give here, as illustration of their village customs, a recital which I heard told at the camp fire one night in the jungles, by one of our policemen of the Palaingtsa clan. He said: 'I was formerly *goung* over the unmarried lads of Hmraphroo village; this was when I was about seventeen years old. At night all who were unmarried, and weaned from their mothers, used to sleep in the *khiong*. One night Ougjyn, and Reyphaw, and Chaindra, came to me and got leave to go and sleep with their sweethearts. The girls were named Aduhbyn, Hlapyn, and Aduhsheay. I remember their names quite well; they are married now, and two of them have children. Our lads went by stealth, of course: if the parents had known it there would have been a row. Next day a little girl told me that Pynhla, another of our lads, who had not got leave to sleep out, had passed the night with her sister. This was quite contrary to rule, and it was therefore determined to punish him. Next day we all went to the Raja's *joom* to help to build his house, and in the evening, when we returned, we made a big fire on the bank of the stream that runs through the village; and I sent and called Pynhla, but he was afraid, and would not come; he stayed in his father's house, and said he had fever. I knew this was only an excuse; so I sent three lads to bring him forcibly, and they went and brought him, although his mother abused them much; but the father and mother could not hurt them, as they were acting by the *goung*'s order. When he came, I called upon him to say why he had slept away from the *khiong* without leave. At first he denied all about it, and then I brought forward the little girl, and he asked her, 'How did you know it was I? It was dark'; and she said, 'The moon shone on your face in the early morning when you opened the door to go away'. When he heard this he saw there was no escape, and he fell at my feet and asked forgiveness; but I fined him three rupees on the spot for the sake of discipline.[1]

In the Uraon *dhumkuria*, as in Bastar, many different punishments are inflicted. In Mandar the boys described the penalty for not keeping the dormitory clean; if any animal or bird dirtied the place they had to make the excrement into little balls with their own hands and throw it away. If a boy wet his bed, they said, the others stuck a pin into the ground and spat on it; the offender had to pick it up with his own teeth. In the middle of the ruined dormitory at Agru I saw a fine stone pillar. Boys who failed to attend the dances were forced to hop round this five times with two bits of bamboo tied tightly to their legs. Fines were also inflicted.

Roy has described the 'slit' in the central pillar of 'some of the *dhumkuria*' and connects it with a fertility ceremony in which the boys insert their 'penile

[1] T. H. Lewin, *Wild Races of South-Eastern India* (London, 1870), pp. 118ff.

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organs' into a slit in a sal sapling.[1] In *Oraon Religion*[2] he says that this is to be found 'in most *dhumkuria* houses'. He only mentions the name of one village, however, Borhambey. We saw the slit there, but did not find it in any of the other dormitories we visited, nor has W. G. Archer been able to find any trace of the custom elsewhere.

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FIG. 111. A tortoise tobacco-box
Height 4½"

FIG. 112. *Marka-batta-gota* or mango tobacco-box
Height 2½"

It is probable that the 'dormitory slit' was chiefly used for punishing refractory boys. According to the *dhangar* who talked to Shamrao Hivale at Mandar, it was used as a punishment for boys who were shy or sulky and refused to join in the communal games and dances. 'A lump of red earth is put on the pillar, and the Mahato stands by with a stick, and hits us on the legs and tells us to push our penis into the earth, and then he pushes us against it again and again till we become red. If a boy is sulky, we bring him at night to the *dubri* (mistress) and we push his penis into the slit until he cries and promises not to offend again. We all hit him and push him to and fro against the pillar till his penis hurts and he cries.'

Discipline in the Naga morung is, as we might expect, more rigorous and the punishments more drastic. 'Among the boys of the village', says Mills,

> there is a certain amount of rough play, and a bumptious or obnoxious youngster is taught his place exactly as he is in an English Public School. He may sit down in the dark and find stinging leaves have been put ready for him. Or a more elaborate punishment may be inflicted which many a mother in England would not approve of for her darling. A plank is laid like a see-saw over a log. One end is weighted down with a wooden pillow. The boy has to jump on the other end and the wooden pillow flies up and hits him on the back of the neck.[3]

There is nothing in Bastar to compare with the Naga bullying, a process by which young boys are hardened to face every kind of danger and difficulty.

[1] Roy, *The Oraons*, p. 243. [2] p. 53.
[3] Mills, *The Rengma Nagas*, p. 52.

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'Men who are now middle-aged say that when they first entered the *morung* they were very severely disciplined, not to say bullied. They were, for instance, held over the fire and compelled to endure the heat without a cry. Or they were made to show their pluck by being sent alone on a dark night to fetch a bamboo from a certain clump. The boy sent was allowed no torch or weapon, and had to gnaw the bamboo through with his teeth or hack it off with a sharp stone. Or, again, a boy would be sent to leave a torch at some particular spot far away in the jungle and come back alone in the dark without a light. In the morning the older boys would go and see if the burnt remains of the torch were in the proper place. Nowadays boys have an easier time, but a considerable number of duties falls to their lot, and for the first three years a boy's life is very like that of a fag at an English Public School. Boys of the lowest class must keep a supply of torches in the *morung* for travellers passing through the village late in the evening; they have to massage the bigger boys' legs when they come in tired from the fields; they are responsible for the wood and water needed for cooking; they must make pipes and sharpen *daos* for their seniors. In fact, for three years they have to do what they are told, and do it quickly—a most excellent system.' [1]

VIII

Hitherto we have considered only the trivialities of ghotul discipline. The sexual relationships of chelik and motiari give rise to far more serious problems. I discuss the large question of ghotul pregnancies in a separate chapter: here we must consider how far life in the dormitories encourages breach of the clan-laws or leads to incest between near kin.

There are the strictest rules against clan-incest. Do they work? It is not easy to give an answer. That clan-incest is possibly not uncommon may be gathered from such sayings as 'When the door is shut there are no clans, we are only chelik and motiari'; 'Once the door is shut and the fire dies down, all relationships are levelled out'; 'Our tribal rules extend to the border of the sleeping-mat; we watch the youngsters as far as that; what happens inside that country no one knows'. It was the opinion of an educated Muria that the chief danger of the ghotul was that it promoted intimacy between members of the same clan and even exposed near relatives to unnecessary temptation.

It is impossible to say. Even if I filled pages with village gossip it would prove nothing. Only an exact statistical inquiry could answer the question whether the Muria chelik was prone to incest or no. And that could never be obtained. But certain things may be affirmed.

At first sight considerable freedom appears to be allowed. A motiari may comb the hair of a boy of her own clan, and may massage him. Even a close relation like an 'own sister' may do this. In Kabonga the Muria said that girls and boys of the same clan might sleep together, but must not have sexual intercourse. At Kajen in 1940, all the boys and girls were of the Halami sept, except one girl who was a Kuhrami. Yet they went daily to the ghotul and slept together there. They denied that they had sexual intercourse. This may be true, but no reliance can ever be put on a denial in Bastar. In the Metawand ghotul I found the following pairs 'married' to each other—Partabi and Maravi, Wadder and Maravi, Maravi and Maravi, Maravi and Katlami, Maravi and Wadder, Maravi and Maravi, Kuhrami and Maravi. In Dongrigura, in 1940, nearly all the ghotul members were Sori, save one or two Naitami and Kuhrami. The Pahardar and Pahardarin were 'married':

[1] Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, pp. 179f.

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Aga baga da dhoti roy saiya sona ?	Whence came the dhoti that looks so smart?
Gāndon kaiyada dhoti roy saiya sona.	The Ganda made the dhoti.
Aga waga dāng muyāng roy saiya sona ?	Whence came the bells that tinkle so merrily?
Kaser kaiyadāng muyāng roy saiya sona.	The Kaser made the bells.
Aga baga dāng paniya saiya sona ?	Whence came the comb that looks so fine?
Layon kaiyada paniya roy saiya sona.	The chelik made the comb that looks so fine.

Finally, I will give two examples of the many obscene songs that are sung during this dance, for otherwise it is impossible to get a clear picture of the meaning and atmosphere of the rite.

Nana jhoriyāna waiwoy gāto tinuāna.	I am Jhoria: I will not eat half-cooked rice.
Nana jhoriyāna dais dudo poyuāna.	I am Jhoria: jumping up and down I hold her breast.
Nana jhoriyāna podoh monde dehuāna.	I am Jhoria: I break the girdle round her waist.
Nana jhoriyāna hārspoche tenāuāna.	I am Jhoria: I quickly pull off her cloth.
Nana jhoriyāna pudete bonde nehyāna.	I am Jhoria: into her I press myself.
Nana jhoriyāna tēks bura mihackwāna.	I am Jhoria: I will pluck out my pubic hairs and throw them away.

In the same style is a Halbi Jhoria Git.

Go to sweep the booth, Belosa.
Where has the bridegroom gone?
He is nowhere in the house.
What can be be frightened of?
He is dying for his penis.
He is going to have his sister.
Where has he taken her?
He has taken her to the river bank.
What leaves has he spread for her?
He has made a bed of *jam* leaves.
Jham-jham he swings to and fro.
Bathing, bathing, he inserts it.
Get off, get off, brother, she cries.

These songs are sung by the bride herself and by a party of unmarried girls. They have changed their sex for the occasion and imagine themselves performing the sexual act as men. The significance of this will be seen when we discuss the ultimate basis of the rite.

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Various reasons have been advanced by scholars to explain this custom in different parts of the world. Frazer has emphasized the difficulty of the problem. 'The religious or superstitious interchange of dress between men and women is an obscure and complex problem, and it is unlikely that any

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single solution would apply to all the cases.'[1] He has suggested that the custom of the bride dressing as a male may be a magical means of ensur-

From a photograph in *Natural Man* by Charles Hose, by kind permission of the publishers, Macmillan & Co., Ltd

FIG. 116. Klemantan women dressed as men

ing a male heir. Certainly it is possible that cross-dressing has something to do with fertility. In Sarawak the Klemantan women dance in turbans and a sort of dhoti at a harvest festival which has been described as 'a celebration or cult of the principle of fertility and vitality—that of the women no less than that of the rice grain'.[2] Zulu women dress in men's clothes and go to herd their cattle to save them from disease.[3] Crawley refers to a custom of the Ngeata of Assam when men dressed as women dance in honour of the children

[1] J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (London, 1911–15), Vol. VI, p. 260. See also J. Abercromby, 'An Amazonian Custom in the Caucasus', *Folk-Lore*, Vol. II (1891), pp. 179ff.

[2] Hose, *Natural Man* (London, 1926), p. 128. Hose gives a charming photograph, upon which Fig. 116 is based.

[3] Crawley, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 320.

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born during the year.[1] In the Mandla District of the Central Provinces of India, Gond and Baiga women from time to time dress up as men and go from village to village with spears and axes on a sort of ceremonial hunt. In each place they catch and kill a pig, an act normally taboo to women. That this is a fertility rite is indicated partly by the fact that it is practised in times of dearth and also by the songs used for the occasion. One of these is as follows:

Kutki kodon ke bharti hoe!	May kutki and kodon increase!
Kukra bilai ke jharti hoe!	May dogs and cats decrease!
Gai garua ke bharti hoe!	May cows and cattle increase!
Kukra bilai ke jharti hoe!	May dogs and cats decrease!

This is called Stiria-raj[2]; the custom is also known among the Maria and Muria. At Toskapal I was told how women made moustaches of lampblack, put on dhoti and turban and went armed from place to place sacrificing goats and pigs. Kond women also dress as men and sacrifice fowls.

Frazer again suggested that the wife wears husband's garments in order to transfer to him her future pains at child-birth.[3] But there is no tradition of the couvade among the Muria, and it seems rather far-fetched to suppose that the young bride will already be so anxious about her pains as to wish to be rid of them even on her marriage day.

Another suggestion is that the marriage disguise is aimed at averting danger from the evil eye at a moment when the bride is particularly susceptible to the influence of hostile magic.[4] The marriage disguise has been noted for different peoples in Africa and India as well as in antiquity; sometimes it is carried so far as to substitute a mock bride for the real one. This was the view of Crooke,[5] after a survey of the Indian evidence, and the final opinion of Frazer.[6] Westermarck, however, who gives many examples of the marriage disguise, doubts whether all these practices can be explained as attempts to deceive evil spirits. 'Facts of this sort seem better to agree with Mr Crawley's theory of "inoculation", according to which the bride or bridegroom assumes the dress of the opposite sex in order to lessen the sexual danger by wearing the same kind of clothes as "the loved and dreaded person", and the greatest possible assimilation between them would best serve the purpose of neutralizing that danger'.[7]

But the Muria practice of not only disguising the bride, but also her companions, so that not even the husband can tell which is which, does appear to aim in some way at averting hostile magic or the enmity of the dead or evil spirits.

[1] Crawley, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 105.

[2] There was a similar custom among the Kol. 'In October, 1880,' says Haldar, 'I witnessed at Ranchi a curious sight of bands of Munda girls, wearing turbans, going about in procession armed with sticks, spears and axes. All the girls of a village so equip themselves and make a descent upon the next village to the east, carrying off whatever fowls, kids, pigs, and lambs they can secure. The village thus devastated takes its chance by sending a similar expedition of Amasons to the next village eastwards and so on. Retaliation is forbidden, nor is any resistance offered; and, moreover, it is quite legitimate for the invaders to seek their booty wherever they may be concealed. This festival, called *Jani-shikar*, takes place once every twelve years, and is supposed to have been started by a Raja of the Nag-bansi family, named Ganes Sahi, in the twelfth year of his reign.'—S. Haldar, 'A Curious Kol Festival', *North Indian Notes and Queries*, Vol. III, p. 98.

[3] Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, Vol. III, p. 216.

[4] Crawley, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 406f. and 318ff.

[5] Crooke, op. cit., p. 8.

[6] Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy* (London, 1910), Vol. IV, pp. 255ff.

[7] E. Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*, Vol. II, pp. 318ff.

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In an interesting account of the women's hunt in the Ranchi District of Chota Nagpur, W. G. Archer has traced the mythological basis of the custom, but he points out that it also fulfils a psychological need. 'We shall only be grasping its real value if we regard it not as fact but as poetry, as the expression of a need rather than a statement of a truth.'

> This need may be defined as follows. In Uraon society, the principles of succession are male, the method of government is male, the salient offices are male. The men are by convention and tradition the social superiors of the women. But if this is the convention, it is only partly the fact. In Uraon villages, the actual relation is one of equality. It is as equals that the men and women dance. It is as equals that a wife and her husband order their family affairs. And it is as equals that they work and live together. There is thus a stress between the formal structure of tribal life and the actual feelings and emotions that thrust upon it. To relieve this stress is the function of the hunt and the myth.
>
> The myth shows that although the men may rule, it is the women who are also men. In its reliance on the success of a simple trick, it expresses Uraon pleasure in naive cleverness and under this typically Uraon cover, it mildly pokes fun at male incompetence. The balance is therefore righted. The women are recognized to be the equals of men.[1]

It is possible that we may have to connect the custom very deep down with the same tendency that has produced the eonist deviation. The last Jhoria songs that I have quoted give some point to the supposition that cross-dressing is an expression of 'penis-envy'. I have only given two songs of this nature, but there are many on the same lines which suggest that for once the motiari are able to assert themselves against the chelik who so constantly establish their sexual domination in normal times.

Probably several different reasons have combined to produce the rite. The Muria girls dance disguised at the marriage partly to protect the bride, partly to avert hostile magic or the evil eye, partly to restore the sexual balance of the tribe and partly too, simply because they love dressing up and get a lot of fun out of it. It is very amusing to see the unfortunate bridegroom trying to guess which of the many girls before him, all looking exactly alike, is his own wife. If he chooses the wrong girl everyone is delighted; when the right girl darts out of the group and beats him it is an occasion not to be forgotten.

But such cross-dressing is always ceremonial. There are strict taboos on men and women wearing each other's clothes on ordinary occasions, and this makes the rite, when it does occur, all the more exciting and impressive.[2]

[1] W. G. Archer, 'The Women's Hunt' in *Essays in Anthropology Presented to S. C. Roy* (1942), pp. 187ff. The same feeling is revealed in the widespread myth of the Island and Country of Women, which goes back to the *Mahabharata* and was recorded by Hiuen Tsang. For an account of this interesting subject and full references to the literature, see W. Crooke, 'The Land and Island of Women', *Man in India*, Vol. II (1942), pp. 276ff; J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas*, p. 263 and my *Myths of Middle India*.

[2] In an account of prophylactic disguises for averting evil in the Bombay Presidency, J. J. Modi gives three types of sex disguise—

(1) Proclaiming the birth of a boy as that of a girl.
(2) Performing the sons or the ear of a boy like a girl's.
(3) Allowing the growth of long hair in a boy so as to make him appear like a girl.

See J. J. Modi, 'Prophylactic Disguise for Averting Evil', *Man in India*, Vol. IV (1924), pp. 186ff.

2: Elwin E/-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE PROBLEM OF GHOTUL INFERTILITY

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RECENT controversies about the sex life of primitive peoples, which have centred mainly on such questions as the extent of their ignorance of physiological paternity and the pre-marital licence they permit, have tended to obscure the equally interesting and important problem of infertile pre-marital promiscuity.

This problem, which arises in an acute form among the Muria, has often puzzled anthropologists. They have observed that many societies allow the unmarried complete freedom of sexual opportunity, that 'illegitimate' births are rare, but that after marriage the women generally prove remarkably fertile. It is to writers on the Pacific area that we are indebted for a clear statement of this problem. African observers have tried to find some solution in the contraceptive practices and restraints of their peoples and have generally, I think, evaded the main issue. In India there is little evidence of value to illustrate the sex life of its aboriginals. It is astonishing that none of the writers on the village dormitories or men's houses throughout the world have seriously tackled a question so fundamental to any discussion of the institutions they have described.

One of the first to draw attention to the question was Seligman, who wrote in 1910 that a puzzling feature of the licence undoubtedly permitted throughout the Massim area of British New Guinea was the very small number of illegitimate births which took place.

> Wherever the confidence of the natives was gained it was admitted that abortion was induced, but the most careful inquiries failed to produce evidence that the practice was as frequent as might be expected considering the prevailing liberty. In fact, with every *a priori* reason for expecting abortion to be commonly produced I came to the conclusion that in fact it was a somewhat infrequent event.[1]

Rivers noticed the same thing among the Eddystone Islanders.

> The very free relations existing before marriage might have been expected to lead to the birth of many children and to the existence of definite regulations for assigning such children to their proper place in society. Such births seemed, however, to be extremely rare, and in the whole of the pedigrees collected by us only one such case was given, and that many generations ago.[2]

Writing in *Oceania* on the culture of the people of Wogeo, one of the New Guinea islands, Hogbin says that,

> Single girls do sometimes have children, but illegitimacy is not nearly so common as one might have expected. Just why this is so it is impossible to say. I observed one fact that bears directly upon the problem, namely that it is extremely rare for women to have children until they are, I judge, more than twenty-one years of age, by which time most of them are safely married. I have noticed that even when a girl is married directly after her first menstruation, which does not

[1] C. G. Seligman, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea* (Cambridge, 1910), p. 500.
[2] W. H. R. Rivers, *Psychology and Ethnology* (London, 1926), p. 76.

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regularly take place until almost certainly after the seventeenth year, it is most unusual for her to have a child for several years.[1]

Barton notes that in the Ifugao *agamang* 'conception results less frequently than one would expect. The surprising intensity of the sex life of the *agamang* period seems to create physiological conditions unfavourable to conception: possibly the excessive intercourse keeps the female organs in a state of hyperemia'.[2]

The classical statement of the problem is by Malinowski. In his great study of the Trobriand Islanders—who have in their *bukumatula* an institution for pre-marital congress not wholly unlike the ghotul—he says,

> Since there is so much sexual freedom, must there not be a great number of children born out of wedlock? If this is not so, what means of prevention do the natives possess?
>
> As to the first question, it is very remarkable to note that illegitimate children are rare. The girls seem to remain sterile throughout their period of licence, which begins when they are small children and continues till they marry; when they are married they conceive and breed, sometimes quite prolifically. I express myself cautiously about the number of illegitimate children, for in most cases there are special difficulties even in ascertaining the fact . . . so that only an approximate estimate can be made even in a community with which one is very well acquainted.
>
> I was able to find roughly a dozen illegitimate children recorded genealogically in the Trobriands, or about one per cent.[3]

Malinowski goes on to say that contraceptive methods are completely unknown in the Trobriands. Two years later Rentoul, in a communication to *Man*, declared that the Trobriand women were 'specially endowed or gifted with ejaculatory powers, which may be called upon after an act of coition to expel the male seed'.[4] Though Malinowski poured scorn on Rentoul's suggestion, describing it as 'one of the typical myths which circulate among the semi-educated white residents', Himes is not prepared to reject it altogether.

> What is undoubtedly the same technique, seminal expulsion by violent bodily movements, is reported as used by Australian natives. Therefore its occasional use by some Trobriand women is a possibility. Other circumstances being equal, a positive declaration of use seems more credible than a denial by natives in conversation with an anthropologist.[5]

Yet even if some of the Trobriand women do practise this means of contraception, as some of them undoubtedly limit the number of their offspring by abortion, the problem still remains—the extreme disparity between the extent of the sexual licence allowed and what is usually regarded as its inevitable sequence. Malinowski says again,

> Can there be any physiological law which makes conception less likely when women begin their sexual life young, lead it indefatigably, and mix their lovers freely? This, of course, cannot be answered here,

[1] H. I. Hogbin, 'The Native Culture of Wogeo', *Oceania*, Vol. V (1935), pp. 320f.
[2] R. F. Barton, *Philippine Pagans* (London, 1938), p. 11.
[3] B. Malinowski, *The Sexual Life of Savages*, third edition (London, 1932), pp. 166ff.
[4] A. C. Rentoul, 'Physiological Paternity and the Trobrianders', *Man*, Vol. XXXI (1931), p. 153.
[5] N. E. Himes, *Medical History of Contraception* (London, 1936), p. 33.

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as it is a purely biological question; but some such solution of the difficulty seems to me the only one, unless I have missed some very important ethnological clue.[1]

The problem thus posed presents itself in a peculiarly acute form when we consider conditions of life in the ghotul. For here, boys and girls—in spite of various checks and disciplines—cohabit from the period of their first tentative experiments, through full sexual maturity, for five to eight years until their freedom is ended by marriage. Yet here too pregnancies are comparatively rare and, though various contraceptive means are practised, few of them have physiological properties.

The incidence of pregnancy, however, is higher than that discovered by Malinowski in the Trobriands. Out of 2000 cases, 80 men admitted to having made their ghotul partners pregnant, and in the 220 ghotul examined, I found a history of 327 pregnant girls.

I believe that these figures are reasonably accurate. Although there is a strict rule against any member of the ghotul revealing even to the elders of the tribe, let alone to an inquisitive outsider, the fact that a motiari is pregnant at the moment, this reticence is no check on the loquacity of older men about matters long since past. As we shall see, there is no moral or social stigma attaching to pre-marital pregnancy; it is rather a matter of business, a complicated financial transaction. Everyone in the ghotul hushes it up rather as one might hush up a friend's mistakes or follies, anxious only to get him off. But once it is all over, the bills paid, the girl married, the child accepted as a full member of its legal father's family and clan, the real father allows himself the pleasures of retrospection; he recalls the potency of former days and finds it not ungratifying to remember what a lad he was.

Eighty pregnancies out of 2000 is 4 per cent, much more than Malinowski's figure, astonishingly more than Rivers'—and this in spite of the fact that the Muria admit to contraceptive practices that are denied in the Trobriand and Eddystone Islands. It is possible that a statistical, instead of a genealogical, inquiry would have yielded higher figures, at least in the Eddystone Islands. The genealogical method is not the best way to discover 'illegitimate' births among primitive people, for the whole trend of primitive society is to legitimatise births wherever possible.

Yet although the older Muria are not unwilling to admit the scandals of long ago, it is regarded as vitally important for a Muria girl to avoid conception. Pre-nuptial intercourse is socially recognized, and even tacitly approved, yet pre-nuptial pregnancy is at the moment of its occurrence a major social disaster, the chief anxiety of ghotul life, the one cloud upon its dreamland. It brings disgrace upon the ghotul, it endangers the girl's normal marriage prospects, it imposes a heavy financial burden upon the boy's parents and it casts a momentary shadow over the whole village. It is sometimes believed that a youth who has 'wasted his seed'[2] in making a motiari pregnant will be sterile later in life. On joining the ghotul the little chelik and motiari are solemnly warned both by their parents and by the ghotul leaders of the risks of pregnancy and are told how to avoid it.

For the Muria have a vivid appreciation of the fact of physiological paternity. The answer to the riddle 'Out of water, bones' is 'Semen and a child'.

[1] Malinowski, op. cit., p. 168.

[2] The expression used for a girl is *mee bigad gaya*, 'her nerve is broken', if this conception out of due time.

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eager youth and splendid physical vigour the chelik and motiari cohabit, employing few precautions worth the name, and yet achieve so low a pregnancy rate as 4 per cent? What explanations have been advanced to solve the problem in other cultures?

Our first point must be to insist that there really is a problem. When chelik and motiari sleep together, do they really have sexual intercourse, or do they seek some other form of sexual gratification that does not involve the penetration of the male seed into the vagina? This question has been raised for the Bantu by Torday who believes that he has solved the problem of infertile pre-marital promiscuity by showing that it is not promiscuity at all.

> It is scarcely credible that Bantu parents and elders should be devoid of common sense to such an extent as to permit their children to have promiscuous intercourse and yet visit them with dire penalties when the natural consequence, pregnancy, follows. When this question has been fully investigated (an extremely delicate task) it will be found, no doubt, that what is generally described as free sexual intercourse between unmarried youngsters is nothing more than one form or another of mutual masturbation.[1]

African tradition undoubtedly favours some form of unconsummated sexual excitement. Laubscher has described the practice of *metsha* among the Tembu and Fingo peoples. This is performed by the boy facing the girl and placing his penis between her thighs, but penetration must be avoided and every three days the girls are examined to ensure that they remain virgins. Laubscher says that this early erotic form of hetero-sexual adaptation does not, at the pre-pubertal period, replace masturbation.[2] Leakey describes a somewhat similar practice of the Masai warriors in their *manyatta*-dormitories. Although a girl cannot refuse an invitation to sleep with the men, 'she is not necessarily expected to allow a man full sexual intercourse, and, in fact, often does not do so. Thus—strange as it may seem—Masai girls do sometimes go to their husbands as virgins in the physical sense of the word, although they have slept with men in the *manyattas* countless times.'[3] Similar sexual play without consummation is known as *ngwiko* by the Wakikuyu[4] and as *simbo* by the Akikuyu. Driberg describes Lango intrigues with unmarried girls as 'platonic' in so far that, although a couple may spend a whole night together, they must not enjoy full sexual relations.[5]

Such practices must involve considerable strain, both physical and psychological, and it is notable that Leakey says that in the dormitory Masai girls 'usually have no objection to full intercourse' except on certain days. The Muria certainly seek to limit the amount of intercourse. Some ghotul send their girls to sleep at home or in a separate house; in these the boys sometimes practise masturbation after the girls have gone, but far more often have intercourse with them on their way home. As in the Masai dormitory, a girl is not bound to have intercourse with the boy she sleeps with on any particular day, but—unlike the Masai tradition—she cannot refuse to have intercourse with him at all. A few girls manage to avoid intercourse for several years, but they are not approved, and the very fact that they are discussed and criticized indicates their rarity. Chelik and motiari do, however,

[1] E. Torday, 'The Principles of Bantu Marriage', *Africa* (London, 1929), Vol. II, p. 256.
[2] B. J. F. Laubscher, *Sex, Custom and Psychopathology* (London, 1937), p. 79.
[3] L. S. B. Leakey, 'Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony', *JRAI*, Vol. LX, p. 194.
[4] C. Dundas, 'Native Laws of some Bantu Tribes', *JRAI*, Vol. LI, p. 246.
[5] J. H. Driberg, *The Lango* (London, 1923), p. 155.

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often sleep together without sexual congress. The girls have a practice, called *dinga-dinga*, of playing with the penis, and the great prominence given to the clitoris in drawings suggests that they indulge in some form of clitoridical stimulation. But full sexual intercourse is everywhere the rule, and is normal through all divergences and for every type of ghotul.

How far does infanticide and abortion solve the problem? Hutton suggests this for the Angami Naga.

> The licence allowed to unmarried girls raises another question. What of their children? Here accurate information is exceedingly difficult to obtain. Illegitimate children are very rare, and Mr Davis remarks that 'it is impossible to resist the conclusion that they are made away with immediately after birth, or that abortion is procured before the birth of the child'.[1]

Yet few cases come to the courts, and even Hutton with his great experience was unable to find examples. For the Muria I have described an attempt at abortion as a routine measure in cases of ghotul pregnancy, but its ineffectiveness is shown not only by definite statements to that effect, but also by the number of children actually born. Infanticide is, I am certain, unknown.

The Muria themselves, as we have seen, place considerable reliance on a frequent change of partners. Pitt-Rivers suggested that promiscuity sterilizes by mixing the sperms of different males.[2] Westermarck considered that promiscuity resulted in a pathological condition of the vagina that resulted in barrenness.[3] But the theory of a spermotoxin has not been endorsed by any responsible scientist, and is not supported by the Muria statistics, for there are more pregnancies in the ghotul where partners are frequently changed than in those where each motiari remains faithful to a single partner.

Not altogether unsound is the Muria belief that contraception is secured by spacing acts of congress and that pregnancy cannot follow single or casual coitus. 'Conception often in the writings of novelists', says Zuckerman, 'results from an isolated sexual act, but in real life this is probably exceptional',[4] and he quotes Meaker as saying that:

> Undoubtedly there are human matings in which a single act of coitus, or at most coitus repeated at intervals throughout one menstrual month, would infallibly produce conception, but these are exceptions. Most couples who succeed in reproducing do so in spite of certain imperfections in the conceptive mechanism .... most people are relatively and not absolutely fertile.[5]

The Muria belief has naturally arisen from an observation of what actually happens. A girl who remains infertile in the ghotul quickly conceives after marriage. 'A motiari', said a chelik at Bhanpuri, 'is an unenclosed clearing; a wife is fenced and irrigated land. As you care for it, it soon bears a harvest, and becomes more and more easy to plough.' And the Jholer of Moroskoro said, 'We had a child within a year of our marriage, for we loved each other and had congress without fear'.

This belief seems to be common in the Pacific. Of the Melanesians of British New Guinea, Seligman says,

[1] J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas*, p. 171.
[2] G. H. L. Pitt-Rivers, *The Clash of Cultures* (London, 1927), p. 148.
[3] E. Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*, Vol. I, p. 334.
[4] S. Zuckerman, 'The Physiology of Fertility in Man and Monkey', *The Eugenics Review*, Vol. XXVIII (1936), p. 48.
[5] S. R. Meaker, *Human Sterility* (London, 1934), p. 41.

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> I believe that . . . Papuasian girls are less easily impregnated than the women of the white race. Whether this is in any degree due to early coitus, early and strenuous work in the gardens, or is a racial peculiarity I do not venture to surmise, but the point of view taken becomes perhaps more comprehensible when it is remembered that the Sinaugolo hold that a single act of coitus is insufficient to produce conception, so that a Sinaugolo girl does not expect to have a child unless visited fairly regularly for a comparatively lengthy time, perhaps not less than a month.[1]

The Tikopia also believe that,

> A child cannot be conceived by a single act of impregnation, but only by a repeated series of acts. This is in line with the view that the child is formed by the coagulation of semen, hence several deposits at close intervals are necessary. The habit of young people of copulating once then missing some days before the next time of intercourse is a corollary of this.[2]

The Muria belief in a safe, or rather unsafe, period is widely shared by other communities. Ancient Indian tradition regarded the *ritu*, or the period extending from the fourth to the twelfth day after the beginning of the menses, as particularly favourable to conception. A husband must approach his wife at this time; if he does not he will suffer the pains of hell.[3] The same belief is universally distributed in modern India, with an emphasis on the first or the first two days after the close of the period. Many aboriginal tribes insist on their women behaving with special restraint and care on these days.

Hollis reports that the Nandi girls are careful not to visit the huts of the warriors for some days after their period 'for fear of becoming pregnant after intercourse with the men'.[4] Himes quotes a report on the Isleta Indians of New Mexico that 'if a woman does not wish to conceive she will not have intercourse for nine days after menstruation'.[5] The great gynaecologist Soranos warned his readers to abstain from coitus directly before and after menstruation.[6] Aetios of Amida, a Greek physician of the sixth century, gave the same advice.[7]

The Muria belief that conception is a girl's own fault and that it can be avoided by the proper psychological attitude during coitus—'Let her not want it, let her not give herself, let her be quiet and not respond—and there will be no danger'—resembles the ancient Chinese practice known as Kong-fou, a sort of self-hypnosis by which the thoughts during intercourse were directed elsewhere. Kisch quotes Riedel as authority for a statement that the women of the island of Buru often had intercourse with strange men, 'but maintained a passive and indifferent state, for the purpose of avoiding conception', and adds that 'it is well known' that

> An active participation on the part of the woman in the sexual act, by increasing her voluptuous sensations, gives rise to certain reflex actions—descent of the uterus, rounding of the os uteri, induration of the portio vaginalis, and, finally, ejaculation of the secretion of the cervical

[1] Seligman, op. cit., p. 500.
[2] Firth, op. cit., p. 492.
[3] J. J. Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India* (London, 1930), Vol. I, pp. 215ff., where references to the classical texts are given.
[4] A. C. Hollis, *The Nandi* (Oxford, 1909), p. 82.
[5] Himes, op. cit., p. 15, quoting E. C. Parsons in *47th Ann. Rep. B.A.E.*, p. 213.
[6] Ibid., p. 90.
[7] Ibid., p. 94.

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glands and of the glands of Bartholin; these changes accelerate the entrance of the semen into the cavity of the uterus, and increase the motility of the spermatozoa.[1]

But Kisch considers that sufficient dependence cannot be placed on this belief that the uterine reflexes are under the conscious will. Himes thinks that the idea simply 'proceeds from a sense of guilt in coitus; if it is not enjoyed, the consequences will not be so unfortunate'.[2] This might well apply to European women, but it is rare to find this sense of guilt among the Muria, though once a chelik at Moroskoro admitted that when, after marriage, he copulated without fear of the consequences his wife quickly became pregnant.

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We may note finally that the Muria are not exceptionally fertile. Out of the 2000 marriages examined, 150 were infertile, though some of these may have been fruitful later. Of these 150, only 1 husband had previously caused a ghotul pregnancy, and his subsequent sterility was regarded by his wife (who was probably the real person at fault) as a punishment. This infertility may be due to dietary factors; but it is interesting that the inflammatory diseases, such as mumps and epididymitis, which usually cause sterility in the male, are practically unknown among the Muria.

All these different factors have probably contributed to the low conception- and birth-rate in the Muria ghotul. A certain number of abortions are procured by not very efficient means; *coitus interruptus* is occasionally practised; certain disciplines and restraints undoubtedly play their part. But the Muria have no form of contraception, that is sufficiently widely practised, that can account for only 80 pregnancies caused by 2000 males copulating at least twice a week (to give the lowest figure for the most disciplined ghotul) for the period between the ages of 12 and 17.

The most satisfactory general explanation is to be found in the theory, usually associated with the name of Hartman, of a period of adolescent sterility. This explanation was first promulgated by Crew in his Presidential Address on 'Puberty and Maturity' before the Second International Congress for Sex Research held in London in 1930. From experiments conducted on 100 female mice at the first oestrous Crew found that while 20 refused to mate, only 24 of the 80 who did mate became pregnant. But three or six months later, the fertility rate rose to 80 or 90 per cent. 'It is seen, therefore', says Crew, 'that though pregnancy can occur at the time of the first oestrous, it is relatively uncommon.'[3] The following year Hartman developed this theory as a result of his observations on the sex life of rhesus monkeys, and in a number of important publications[4] has since established the fact that there is not only a 'very high incidence of non-ovulatory cycles in young mammals but that human beings also have an infecund period for some years after the menarche'. Ashley-Montagu has given an admirably lucid summary of this and subsequent literature on the subject. 'It has long been known', he points out, 'that puberty is by no means coincident with the development of the reproductive powers, that in the girl menstruation may long precede the

[1] R. H. Kisch, *The Sexual Life of Women*, Eng. trans. by M. E. Paul. (New York, 1926), p. 403.
[2] Himes, op. cit., p. 21.
[3] F. A. E. Crew, 'Puberty and Maturity' in *Proceedings of the Second International Congress for Sex Research* (London, 1930), p. 9.
[4] C. G. Hartman, 'On the Relative Sterility of the Adolescent Organism', *Science*, Vol. LXXIV (1931), pp. 226-7; *Contributions to Embryology*, No. 134 (Washington, 1932), pp. 1-164; *Time of Ovulation in Women* (Baltimore and London, 1936); *Sex and Internal Secretions* (Baltimore, 1932).

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TABLE TWO

Illustrating the relation of homicide cases to the estimated population

	Population in 1941	Annual average of homicides	Average annual incidence of homicides to the million[1]
Bison-horn Maria ...	175,000	12·1	69·14
Ghotul Maria ...	100,000	2·1	21·00
Others ...	360,000	11·6	32·22
Total ...	635,000	25·8	40·63

have for one reason or another lost their dormitories. 'Reformers' who would banish the dormitory from tribal India should very carefully consider this fact before they do so.

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It is not easy to obtain comparative figures for other tribes or communities in India. There is a Maria (but not Bison-horn Maria) population in the Chanda District: here there were 26 cases of homicide in 10 years among a population of 34,776—which works out near the Bison-horn Maria figure of 69 to the million. In Mayurbhanj State, in 1935-36 there were 25 similar cases from a population of about 890,000 or about 28 to the million. In 1939, there were 184 persons found guilty under Sections 302 and 304 I.P.C. in the Central Provinces and Berar, which gives a figure of approximately 11 to the million. In the same Province, with its total population of some eighteen millions, 53 persons were sentenced to death and 131 to transportation in 1941. The figures for 1942 were 59 and 127.

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Against these figures, the incidence of 69 homicides to the million among Bison-horn Maria seems very high, but it must be remembered that the inhabitants of the Central Provinces and the Eastern States are among the most peaceful people on this planet. Laubecher gives some comparative statistics from various parts of the world. The rate of homicide among South African Pagans was 171 per million in 1935. In 1924, Canada had a homicide rate of 15 per million. In 1926, the rate for England and Wales was 7 per million.

[1] Based on the population estimates for 1941.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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In the same year the rate for U.S.A. was 52 per million for the white population and 454 per million for the Negroes.[1]

In India at least all such calculations are bound to be rough and ready. The population figures for individual tribes and areas are often in doubt: some police statistics include all cases of violent death, some only the 'true' homicides. There can be no doubt that many crimes are concealed from the police. But the figures may serve as a basis of discussion.

II

I have already spoken of the 100 files of homicide cases which I have examined. Brief epitomes of these are given in an Appendix. These cases covered a period of 20 years, during which the total number of homicides could not have been more than 250—there were 121 Maria homicides in the last 10 years and the amount of crime was certainly not greater in the first decade than in the second. I have included only those cases which ended in the conviction of one or more of the accused.

The 100 cases involved the conviction of 117 people as follows:—

TABLE THREE

Punishments awarded in 100 cases, involving the conviction of 117 persons

Sentenced to death under S. 302, I.P.C.	21
Executed	18
Transportation for life (14 years imprisonment under S. 302, I.P.C.)	57
Various terms of imprisonment under S. 304, I.P.C. ...	39
Acquitted but detained as insane under S. 471, Cr.P.C.[2]	3

The great majority of persons convicted were men, as the next Table shows.

[1] Laubscher, op. cit., p. 307.

[2] This Section provides for the detention in safe custody of a person whose act would "but for the incapacity found, have constituted an offence". It does not involve detention in an asylum though it may lead to this. Deaf and dumb persons guilty of murder have been proceeded against under this Section.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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possession of a dancing outfit that led Wango to murder his betrothed Paike. But when Alami Mata had his splendid bison-horn head-dress, which he loved and cared for with devotion, stolen he did not seek out and kill the thief but was so miserable that he hanged himself. In several cases disputes about the right of a girl to visit her mother's house led to murder. In as many others it led to suicide. Sometimes a girl hangs herself because she is not allowed to go home. Sometimes the husband hangs himself out of loneliness and misery when his wife deserts him for her parents. A public insult caused Marvi Hinga to murder his mother-in-law. Had he been of a different temperament like Markami Pandu, who was abused and insulted by his wife for not working properly, he would have hanged himself. Fatigue drives some Maria to murder in a fit of exhausted rage, but others hang themselves instead.

Some sick people murder the magician who they believe has sent affliction upon them. Others commit suicide in order to escape from him. The Maria themselves identify homicide and suicide in so far that both lead to a violent disturbance of village life. Both involve them in various supernatural dangers, and the ghosts of both can be dealt with in much the same way.

R. S. Cavan discusses the relations of widow suicide and human sacrifice. The voluntary sacrifice of widows at the funerals of their husbands has been recorded in India and China, throughout the central portion of Negro Africa and among certain aristocratic American Indian tribes. These areas are also the areas of human sacrifice.

> In the Orient the sacrifices are a matter of history and are often recorded as accompanying the widow suicide. Among the preliterates, the sacrifices were noted in conjunction with the suicides by early white observers. Moreover, in few parts of the world was human sacrifice found except in the groups which also had Sati. Human sacrifice and Sati went hand in hand,[1]

The Maria do not have the custom of widow suicide, and human sacrifice is equally rare among them.

I will begin, as in the case of the homicides, with general statistics about suicide in Bastar during the last 10 years.

[1] R. S. Cavan, *Suicide* (Chicago, 1928), p. 72.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943.
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TABLE NINE

Number of suicides in Bastar in 10 years, 1931-40

Tribe or Caste	Number of Cases	Annual average of suicides to the million[1]
Bison-horn Maria ...	97	53·14
Ghotul Muria ...	12	22·00
Others (whole State) ...	130	36·11
Total ...	245	38·58

It is notable again that the highest figure is for the Bison-horn Maria and the lowest for the Ghotul Muria. The Muria, however, are more prone to suicide than murder, which is perhaps what we might expect from a tribe so singularly free of jealousy and passion.

TABLE TEN

Methods of suicides used by all tribes and castes (245 cases)

By cutting the throat	1
By hanging	214
By drowning	15
By poisoning	9
By means not fully reported	6

Every case, except one of drowning, of aboriginal suicide in Bastar has been by hanging. This may be due to the fact that the people are not adept at poisons—murder by poison is very rare among them—and because there are few wells in aboriginal villages, and the tanks and streams where they get their water are fairly shallow.

762 171 It is said that in India generally, drowning is the most common method of achieving suicide, and then hanging. In England, hanging comes first, then poisoning, then cutting the throat, and lastly drowning. In India men resort to hanging and drowning in about equal numbers but six out of seven

[1] Based on the population estimates of 1941.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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female suicides prefer drowning.[1] But this is not so among the Maria. One woman preferred to hang herself even on the very banks of the Indrawati, though the deep waters of the river were at hand.

In the 50 cases of which I have detailed information, 19 suicides were committed inside a building, 16 of them inside the dwelling-place of the family. In 7 other cases death occurred near the house. In the other 24 cases the suicide took place in the jungle, a rope or cloth being attached to the branch of a tree. Among trees the mahua (*Bassia latifolia*, Roxb.) was the most popular with 6 cases, and after it the mango with 3. Otherwise there is a very great variety in the trees selected for this gloomy purpose; there do not seem to be any taboos observed, though I notice the sacred saja (*Terminalia tomentosa*, W. & A.) is not used—but this may be for the entirely practical reason that it does not have suitable overhanging branches.

The method of self-execution seems to be to climb up the tree, to attach and arrange the cord and then jump down. When the suicide occurs inside a house, the person stands on a fish-trap or basket and kicks it away. In many cases, the rope consists of the victim's own loin-cloth, turban or sari, but several different kinds of rope are also used. Rope made of the twisted siari (*Bauhinia vahlii*, W. & A.) creeper is perhaps the most common. Jute cords for tethering cattle, and ropes made of various kinds of bark are also used.

TABLE ELEVEN

Analysis of 50 Maria suicides by sex

Men	26
Women	24

The contrast between homicide and suicide in respect of the sex-ratio is very striking; 5 per cent stands against 48 per cent. There may be many reasons for this, chiefly that

[1] R. Ranchhodas and D. K. Thakore, *The Law of Crimes* (Bombay, 1911), p. 601, in the author's comment on Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code. But in the U.S.A., the order is said to be—for men—firearms, hanging, poisonous gas, corrosives, and—for women—gas, corrosives, firearms, drowning. In Japan, hanging first and then drowning are the favourite methods for both sexes.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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762 a woman ought not to kill and often lacks the means of killing —she does not usually learn to be expert with the bow and arrow or with the axe. It is possible that some of the suicides would have been murder, had there been the means and opportunity.

The suicide sex-ratio is remarkable when compared to the situation elsewhere. In Europe and America, there has been over a long period of years a far less equal ratio, varying from one woman to every three or five men. That these figures do vary suggests, however, that 'the propensity of men to commit suicide is probably not inherent in their sex, a conclusion further supported by figures for the Orient. For instance, [171] in Japan the proportion of women who commit suicide is much higher than for Europe or America. The situation in India is yet more at variance with the relations noted for the Occident'.[1]

TABLE TWELVE

Analysis of 50 Maria suicides by age

Under 15	1
Between 15 and 20	12
Between 20 and 25	9
Between 25 and 30	1
30 and over	5
40 and over	8
50 and over	8
Age not specified	6

There is not anything significant in the above Table except that we should notice that nearly half the suicides were of young people. The older men and women, by the time they have reached some position of dignity in the tribe, have consolations that help them to cling to life. Many of the suicides of the older people are due to insanity and intolerable disease believed to be the result of witchcraft.

[1] Cavan, op. cit., p. 308.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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Socrates and Jesus were criminals according to the legal standards of their day. We confine and kill those who in the days of Abraham and Ulysses or in positions of power and influence would be heroes. Of the ten chief crimes of the Hebrews of old, only one is now a crime. Many of the knights and barons of the Middle Ages were brigands, but were not then outlawed by public sentiment as abnormal. There is deep and wide-spread feeling in every community that in extreme hunger all things belong to all. The thought of killing our own fathers or children is monstrous, but we kill the fathers and children of other people with impunity in war. Many of our greatest criminals would have been normal and perhaps eminently useful citizens in other ages and places. Judged by severe and inner standards of morals, most of us have committed every crime'.[1]

So also many of the Maria homicides described in this book will be recognized not as anti-social crimes, but as expressions of the strongly social instinct of the murderer. A father seduces the wives of his sons, and in order to enjoy them in freedom drives the boys and their mother out of his house and refuses them support. The murder of such a man expresses a social, rather than an anti-social, instinct. To the Maria the witch is the greatest menace to the order and security of daily life. When he murders a witch, therefore, he is the victim of intellectual error rather than of murderous passion. Adam gives an interesting example from Europe. 'A case is reported by M. Friedmann, of Weisbaden, of two soldiers who agreed that the one should shoot the head off the other. The victim firmly believed that the survivor could with certain words of sorcery charm his head on again and that after the operation the latter would be able to discover hidden treasure. The first half of the experiment was duly performed and apparently without any difficulty, but the sorcerer dismally failed to replace his comrade's head as agreed upon. It was established that he did not intend to kill his friend, but, with his assistance, expected them both to discover hidden treasure. Nor could he be considered negligent or careless as he did what he did carefully and on purpose, being convinced of the harmlessness of the act. If

[1] G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence* (London and New York 1904), Vol. I, pp. 340 f.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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he was punished for anything it was for mere ignorance and stupidity. This incident actually took place as recently as 1900'.[1]

Sir Cecil Walsh advances the view that many Indian village crimes are of a 'judicial character', and that the people are driven to commit them by the law's delays.

> A very large proportion of the cases of violence in northern India arise out of hot blood, ungovernable temper, and the natural inclination of the villager, who is generally miles away from any police, to take the law into his own hands and to fight out his quarrel on the spot. There is nothing like this in agricultural districts in England. It has been said that the agricultural classes are not inferior in intelligence to the English peasant. If natural acumen, rapidity of thought, and liveliness of imagination are meant, it may be so. But whether the cause be their lack of education, the narrowness of their religion, the climate, or, as I have often thought, their lack of association with men of attainments superior to their own, the fact is that they fail to use their intelligence, and upon slight provocation lose all power of reasoning and self-control. It is not much good having an equivalent of intelligence if you don't use it when it is wanted. Whether it is a question of cattle trespass, irrigation, family enmity, an old personal grudge, a sexual difficulty, or some quite trivial dispute, the average cultivator will break out at once into abuse, often of the most disgusting character, which develops rapidly into a fight, in which the relations and friends on either side will join in substantial numbers if they happen to be near. If one disputant, finding himself seriously outnumbered, a disadvantage which the villager invariably hopes to impose upon his enemy, should discreetly retire, the fight will take place later on, more or less in cold blood, when both sides are ready. It is impossible to regard these law-breakers and disturbers of the peace as criminals in the ordinary signification of that term. They are probably as honest and industrious as the average respectable citizen in a civilized centre of industry. They want speedy justice, or, what they regard as the same thing, the vindication of their own opinion. They prefer the British variety. But it takes time, and they can't wait. They are great believers in getting in the first blow, and,

[1] Adam, op. cit., p. 262. A remarkable parallel is provided by a case that occurred at Nagpur in 1923, when a constable and a pious friend made a pact to offer their heads to Kali in order to obtain immortality. They mistook a statue of the Virgin Mary for the goddess and the constable stabbed himself to death before it.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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When we turn to the 50 sample cases (details of which are given in an Appendix) we find the following.

TABLE SIXTEEN

Reasons for suicide in 50 Maria cases

Insanity	7
Disease and fear of magic	9
Grief and loneliness	4
Fear of officials	2
Regret for harsh behaviour to someone loved ...	3
Resentment at a rebuke	7
An intolerable home	4
Antagonism between wife and husband	9
Intoxication	1
Economic causes	1
Special cases	3

There is no evidence for supposing any of the suicides were due to a desire for 'identification with the dead', although in one case a youth slept all night before his death in the granary where the sacred Pot of the Dead was kept. Nor is the desire for revenge specially evident, though it may, of course, have been concealed from the authorities. No doubt the feeling that one's death will cause trouble to one's relatives and so pay them out is often present in suicides that are due to temper. Not one case appears to have been due to sexual jealousy, though several were due to sexual disappointment. The majority seem to have been caused by a desire to escape from a physical or domestic situation that had become intolerable. The insult, as in other primitive cultures, is a very potent stimulus to suicide. This too creates an intolerable situation from which escape is necessary, but I do not notice any stress on the protest which a death makes against those who have done harm.

Suicide has been studied with some care among the Indian tribes of North America. The older view was that it was exceptional among primitive people. Thus Hrdlicka says that it was rare on the San Carlos reservation, "infrequent" among the Jicarillas: 'among the Navaho rare instances occur from destitution, despondency or drink'. Among the Papago, Pima, Zuni and other tribes suicide

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17! was equally rare. Among the Tarahumare occasionally a despondent individual ended his life by hanging. Everywhere it was said to be specially rare among women. Where it occurred it was said to be due to despondency.[1] It was reported as unusual among the Havasupai.[2]

Recent research, however, suggests that the tendency to self-destruction is commoner than was formerly supposed, and Voegelin says that 'modern inquiry into the subject is revealing a growing number of tribes in northeastern California in which suicide was practised'. For both the Klamath and Modoc 'suicide is a romantic gesture, motivated by disappointment in love and, indirectly, jealousy. Women hang themselves, men in some instances drown themselves. Among the Atsugewi, Achomawi and Surprise Valley Paiute, suicide was usually motivated either through jealousy or quarreiling; eating wild parsnip root was one of the more generally accepted modes; the bodies of suicides were accorded the same disposal as the bodies of persons dying natural deaths, but only close relatives wailed'.[3]

Among the Tanaina, suicide is said to have become more common 'when old men lived to see the last of their sons die'.[4] Among the Mohave 'the conflict between longing for the dead and the impossibility of catching up with them should one live too long after they died led to an appalling number of suicides'.[5] W. N. Fenton traces the increase to contact with civilization. In a study of the Seneca and Mohawk Indians, he writes, 'Public opinion condemned as cowardice male suicides to avoid physical suffering, such as torture; but condoned cases of women who were mistreated by lovers. The greatest frequency came during the period immediately following white contact when conditions were ripe for social disorganization. The principal motive with women was revenge of mistreatment by husbands who deserted them at middle age; children resented restraint,

[1] A. Hrdlicka, *Physiological and Medical Observations*, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bull. XXXIV, 1908, p. 171.
[2] L. Spier, *Havasupai Ethnography*, Anthropological Papers of the American Bureau of Natural History, Vol. XXIX, 1928, p. 143.
[3] E. W. Voegelin, 'Suicide in Northeastern California', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXXIX (New Series), p. 456.
[4] C. Osgood, 'Tanaina Culture', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXXV (New Series), p. 714.
[5] G. Devereux, 'Mohave Soul Concepts', *American Anthropologist*, Vol XXXIX (New Series), p. 422.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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and men sought to avoid physical suffering, either martyrdom or blood revenge; some cases involve loss of status . . . Avoidance remains the dominating motive of Iroquois suicide.'[1]

Suicide among the Trobriand Islanders, says Malinowski, 'is certainly not a means of administering justice, but it affords the accused and oppressed one—whether he be guilty or innocent—a means of escape and rehabilitation. It looms large in the psychology of the natives, is a permanent damper on any violence of language or behaviour, on any deviation from custom or tradition, which might hurt or offend another. Thus suicide, like sorcery, is a means of keeping the native to the strict observance of the law, a means of preventing people from extreme and unusual types of behaviour. Both are pronounced conservative influences and as such are strong supports of law and order'.[2]

This is a little too emphatic for the situation in Bastar, but duly modified might apply there also. But whatever primitive suicide may be, it is not trivial. Nor is it altogether dishonourable. The man insulted escapes, it is true, but he restores his honour. The girl forced into an unwelcome marriage runs away from it, but she preserves her dignity and prestige.

[1] W. N. Fenton, *Iroquois Suicide*, Bureau of American Ethnology; Anthropological Papers, Washington, 1941, p. 134.
[2] B. Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (London, 1932), p. 98.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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Man and wife generally settle down at first in a small hut of their own. But there is a sort of joint family system with the father or elder brother as the patriarchal head, and sometimes a large family occupies an entire hamlet of its own in one part of the village territory. The institution of the cross-cousin marriage tends to unite families very closely.

This happy and united family life is disturbed by several causes. One, as we have seen, is the commonplace invasion of the happiness of two people by a third. Another is the presence of the husband's younger brother in the house, and the privileged relationship which he has with the elder brother's wife. Another is the custom that allows a married girl to visit her mother's house. Yet another is man's insatiable passion for domestic experiment which leads to the complicated and dubious joys of plural marriage.

It will be of interest to compare with this the situation in ordinary Hindu families, where the common disparity of age between husband and wife creates stresses from which the Maria are free. 'There are tendencies at work within the family institution itself which sometimes lead to criminal action. The joint family rests upon the mutual toleration and sacrifice of the different members of the household. While forbearance is the outcome of long discipline in joint family life, it is put to a severe test as a result of the growth of individualism. Again, the disparity between the ages of husband and wife, of parents-in-law and girl-wife, offers opportunities of exploitation and even cruelty. The custom of infant marriage is apt to promote oppression, especially where there is a striking difference in age between the husband and the wife. Cases of cruelty to young wives are often brought to the courts in India.

'In 1929 a Hindu weaver in Hyderabad, who had married a young girl, chained her like an animal to a big mill-stone to prevent her making frequent attempts to run away. She subsequently died.

'In another case in the same year a young girl-wife who was being forcibly taken to her husband's house managed to free herself, jumped into a wayside well, and was drowned'.[1]

[1] Haikerwal, op. cit., p. 39.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE CRIMES OF WOMEN

I

674 171 It is notorious that women are everywhere less criminal than men. 'The proportion varies, however, greatly in different countries. In France it is usually about 4 to 1; in the United States it is about 12 to 1; in Italy and Spain the proportion of women is very small. In Great Britain, on the other hand, the proportion of criminal women is extremely large, especially for the greater crimes'.[1] In Bastar the proportion is 23 men to 1 woman.

674 Havelock Ellis points out that woman is protected from crime by certain physical and psychological characteristics—her physical weakness, sexual selection, domestic seclusion, prostitution and maternity. Among Maria women, however, the only one of these forms of protection to operate is maternity. The women are often of considerable physical strength and are as capable of striking a murderous blow with an axe as are the men. Since every Maria woman is married, sexual selection is of no assistance in removing from the place of danger and temptation the more degenerate and abnormal types.

462 562 As far as the domestic seclusion of women is concerned, the Maria situation resembles that in the Baltic provinces of Russia of former days, where the women shared the occupations of men and the level of feminine criminality was comparatively high. In England also, which has taken the lead in enlarging the sphere of women's work, 'the level of feminine criminality has for half a century been rising'. The Maria woman is not only free to assist her husband in the tasks of daily life, but she also frequently participates in those very occasions which are regarded as most provocative to murder, the drinking parties when large quantities of rice-beer are consumed. [548] There is no prostitution among the Maria. But on the other hand women do not, as in Europe, fall out of the social ranks.

[1] Havelock Ellis, op. cit., pp. 261 f.

[p. 161]

1: Koppers--215 E-5 (1938-1939) 1948 AW25 Bhil AW25
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The Kali Durga Novena (Jawara) among the Gonds

Among the Gonds who live in the Maikal Mountains (about 100 miles east of Jubbelpur), the Zwārā ceremony enjoys special popularity. This is less the case among the Baiga, as Elwin declares. (434) This

434. (Footnote 215), p. 64.

is significant because the Baigas, contrary to the Gonds, represent the more primitive and older population on the spot. Instead of Zwārā, the Hindi word Jawārā (barley) is used among the Gonds.

A sorcerer (called panda in this region) named Phulsa and living in the village Batondha, promulgated a Jawārā festival there in May of the year 1939. With regard to all essentials, the novena of the Gonds is comparable to that of the Bhils. Nevertheless the ceremony has its own coloring among the Gonds.

The magician (panda) of the Gonds, at least nowadays, only sows wheat although the ceremony bears the name Jawārā (barley). Thus he does not also sow wheat and barley as the Bhil magician does. Our panda Phulsa had gotten the wheat in earthen jugs (kaltsa) and in bamboo stands (chatura), which previously had been filled with dirt naturally. In this case one pot and one bamboo stand came from Phulsa himself; about 10 more had been contributed by other families. When the Panda is consulted in cases of illness, he frequently gives the direction that participation is necessary at the time of the next Jawārā festival. For this, the panda receives a goat or a chicken as a sacrificial offering. Panda Phulsa, to be sure, asserted that his Mata, who is naturally identical with Kālī Durgā, desires no bloody sacrifice from [182] him, but requires instead only the offering of coconuts. But that is by no means the case with all Gond pandas. With Phulsa there is only a greater degree of Hinduization recognizable, for he himself also explained that he had directly implored the mother goddess to demand no bloody sacrifices from him, but to be satisfied with coconuts.

The bamboo stands mentioned show two or even three "stories" (Plate XIV/2) to a certain extent. This is attained by splitting in various places, the strong bark of a bamboo pole which is as thick as an arm. These sections are then made into the shape of a funnel,

1:Koppers--216 E-5 (1938-1939) 1948 AW25 Bhil AW25
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in which other, and specifically thinner, bamboo splices are used. The basket-weaver does this job for a negligible compensation. Panda Phulsa had pots and bamboo stands standing in a little building supplementary to his house which was his cult place in general, as was demonstrated by the trident and other things.

The bamboo stands show a striking similarity to that remarkable structure over which the "unicorn" steer often extends his head in the well-known representations of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa. Already much effort has been expended in order to interpret this representation. Up to this point no one has been able to offer a satisfactory explanation. (435) The bamboo stands used at the Jawārā festival of the

435. Last treated by H. Mode, Indische Frühkulturen und ihre Beziehungen zum Westen (Basel, 1944), p. 54 f.

Gonds caused me immediately and on the spot to think of the puzzling implements of the Indus culture. Meanwhile, I believe that in a special study, "Zentralindische Fruchtbarkeitsrieten und ihre Beziehung zur Indus-Kulture," (436) I have determined more closely the relations

436. Appeared in Geographica Helvetica, Vol. I (Zürich, 1946), p. 165-177.

between the complexes named, and in any case have made their reality rather probable. The possibility is not excluded that the funnel-shaped sacrificial baskets, which are made of bamboo, and which are widespread from Assam to Eastern Indonesia, belong to the same group. (437)

437. Heine-Geldern in G. Buschan, Illustrierte Völkerkunde Vol. II (Stuttgart, 1923), p. 860. "The funnel-shaped sacrificial baskets are widespread from Assam to Eastern Indonesia which they make by cutting lengthwise incisions into one end of a bamboo pole, bending these slits outward, and weaving bamboo strips or rotang through them horizontally. Planted in the ground at the other end, they serve as a sort of altar. Among the Was in Burma, the Kalingas

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and Tinggian in North Luzon and the Bataks in Sumatra, it also serves as a temporary or permanent receptacle for the skulls acquired head-hunting."

/183/ Let us return to our Panda Phulsa himself. During the nine Jawārā days he wears an iron ring around his neck. He does this because the Kālī Mātā of Calcutta is also decked out with such a ring. At the same time Phulsa has a pierced fruit hanging on a neck cord. The sādhu (438), he claims, placed it there. On the eighth day of

438. Sādhu = pious man ("saint").

the novena, the sacrifice of breads is carried out. The main celebration takes place on the ninth day. I had the opportunity to attend just this one on the spot.

The final celebration began around four o'clock in the afternoon. In front of the door of Panda Phulsa's house a so-called chauk (a magic square) was drawn on the ground with meal. In the vicinity stand three, four or up to five poles one meter tall. They represent the mother goddesses (Kālī Mātā and so forth). As a matter of fact, seven poles should be standing here, for seven mata's. But since Panda Phulsa has been living here only for a short time, this is explained by the fact that his arrangements are still incomplete, as was stated. At the feet of those mata's and, at the same time facing the chauk, lies the son of the Panda on his knees and ("possessed" by a mata) rotating his head back and forth. He is obviously supposed to succeed his father in office some day. Let it be mentioned here also that, according to the statement of the Gonds, the sorcerer is always "possessed" by only one deity, hence never by several deities. The baskets and bamboo stands are fetched out of the sanctuary and placed on the chauk.

In the procession which then takes place, the Panda's sister plays a chief role. If necessary she can also be represented by some other female. The Panda's sister carries the pot of wheat which he himself has prepared. (439) Previously the sister has already rubbed her

439. The Panda's sister naturally reminds one of the girls among the Bhils who carries the water jug on which the wheat of the "little evil

spirits" stands or stood.

brother thoroughly with milk and turmeric dye (440); this mitigates,

440. The reddish-yellow color plays a significant role in the life of the Bhils, as well as other primitive tribes of India. We encounter its use especially in the wedding (footnote 230), p. 25 ff. and at the Tdoe (further below, p. 256 f.).

as they say, the otherwise easily aroused deities.

A younger man carries the pole fashioned after a standard, which represents the Marhai (441)-Mātā. In order to cause the /184/ bearer

441. The Marhai-Mātā is one of the seven mātā's of the panda. It seems that precisely her pole is gladly decorated with peacock tail feathers. As far as she is concerned, the Marhai-Mātā is considered a good goddess.

of this pole to be "possessed" by the Marhai-Mātā, the Panda has previously thrown rice kernels at the pole. The bearer of the Marhai-Mātā pole then rather rapidly shows that he is restless and runs jerkily here and there with it, as though a secret power were driving him. The end of the pole threatens several times to come into contact with the ground—it looks as if an invisible power were driving it. At such moments it is the wife of the Panda especially who raises a great hue and cry. Such contact actually may not take place. Otherwise all sorts of misfortune would have to come especially to the Panda's house.

The procession now proceeds to the nearest watering place, about 1,000 meters away. Apart from the pot which the Panda's sister carries, the other jugs and bamboo stands are distributed to a number of persons. The young people especially are there with hands ready to help. All at once the Panda swings up onto the shoulders of a strong and still younger man. He rides him as a horse (Plate XIV/3). As he told later, the Mātā suddenly suggested that to him. To the question what would have happened if her choice had fallen upon a weaker person, he answered quickly and certainly that nothing would

have happened; for in such a case the Mātā would surely have come to his aid with the necessary strength. This bearer, incidentally, is afterwards paid for his effort with a coconut. Fortunately for him, the Panda Phulsa is a slight and light person.

On the way, the procession has to pass the house of the somewhat more respected Gond, Churaman by name. At the suggestion of the Mātā, as he says again, Phulsa causes the procession to halt here. Actually everything had certainly been agreed upon previously with the pious Churaman. Churaman wears the Brahman band, and thus shows he is relatively greatly Hinduized. In his house everything is well prepared. Churaman has two wives: the first is barren, and the second presented him with a son who is sickly. On a brass dish, the first wife brings the following gifts to the Panda who is sitting in the foreyard of the house: a coconut, two pineapples, milk and greens, on which holdi (turmeric) is sprinkled. The Panda accepts these gifts, but they are intended for the mātā. Over the head of the childless woman the Panda swings his scourge made of cowtail hair and says: "I will give you children." In this way the evil spirits (bhūts) are supposed to be driven out, and thus the barrier in the way of children made to disappear. Above the sickly boy of the second wife Phulsa makes similar motions and says: "I will make you healthy!"

/185/ The stop at Churaman's house lasted about one-quarter of an hour. Immediately afterwards the procession is continued. About 200 meters before the watering place there is again a pause for three to five minutes, and a smoke sacrifice is quickly offered.

Having arrived at the watering place, all participants stick a few of the delicate wheat plants behind their ears. Everything else—hence the plants along with the dirt sticking to them—is sunk in the water, but to be sure the earthen jugs are carefully spared; they are taken home in order to make them serviceable again for practical life. But since no profane usuage is known for the bamboo stands, they are simply left lying on the spot after they have been emptied. No difficulties were encountered when I picked them up and took them along for my collections. A general greeting (embrace) forms the conclusion of the Jawārā celebration.

In summary, the following is given as the purpose of the exercise: the Mātā is supposed to protect everyone and everything and to allow them to grow and thrive in health and prosperity.

Jawārā Song

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1. Behind the bar (tree) stands the pipal tree.
   By the door stands the fruit-bearing nim tree.
   Ho Mata, you are good.
2. Under the nim tree hangs a swing.
   Who is to be swung?
   Ho Mata, you are good.
3. The Dewi (mata) sits on the swing,
   And the servant swings.
   Hanuman (the monkey) speaks: Swing to (i.e., he murmurs hm, hm).
   Ho Mata, you are good.
4. Swinging, swinging, she (Dewi) became unconscious,
   And the neckband tore apart.
   Ho Mata, you are good.
5. Who will pick up the beads (which have fallen on the ground)?
   Who will put the string of beads back together?
   Ho Mata, you are good.
6. The goddess has picked them up.
   And the servant helped her.
   The gardener put it (the string of beads) back together.
   Ho Mata, you are good.

/186/ 7. Well, well, Mata, I have sung this song.
O goddess Hinglaj (442), bless (us)!

442. "Hinglaj, said to be derived from Sanskrit hingula, a preparation of mercury with sulphur, vermilion: possibly, on account of the smearing of a sacred stone with red pigment, . . ." W. Crooke, ERE, Vol. VI, p. 715. Under the name Hinglaj the great mother goddess is venerated in Baluchistan, west of the Hingol River, near its mouth. The Hinglaj Mātā is widely known in India.

Ho Mata, you are good.